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MENS CHRISTI

AND

OTHER PROBLEMS IN THEOLOGY

AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE first five of the Lectures in this volume were delivered in December, 1890, before the students of the "Episcopal Theological Seminary" at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and others, at the request of the Trustees of that Institution. The topics were selected as such in which it was thought that Theology as a unified system was capable of and might receive development and advance; or as touched practical questions of moment, and under discussion at the present day.

The sixth lecture was delivered in the year 1889 before the "Summer School of Theology" at Sewanee, Tennessee, and has been printed in the "Magazine of Christian Literature" for November, 1890. It is here appended as opening up a fruitful subject for further treatment.

AUGUST, 1891.

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LECTURE I.

THE QUESTION OF JESUS' KNOWLEDGE, AND OF INSPIRATION, AS AFFECTED BY THE DOCTRINE OF THE KENOSIS.*

The question has arisen afresh in our day of the extent of the knowledge of Jesus Christ before his death; or, as some minds state it to themselves, the extent of his ignorance. This is an old question, and on some occasion or other, and in some shape or other, has come up frequently in the history of Christian thought. We are reminded of the controversies and struggles of the early days, through which the Christian church found itself, at length, able and authorized to asseverate, in terms, the doctrine of our Lord's true human-

* One reason why this was selected as the topic for a lecture was the stir made among theologians by the appearance of the Rev. Mr. Gore's article on Inspiration in the book entitled "*Lux Mundi.*" But I wrote the lecture before reading the article, that my own treatment might be more dispassionate. I found in Mr. Gore's disquisition much to sympathize with, and some things to criticise. Those who read both will see that I have gone into the matter more deeply, and have attempted an analysis that it did not come within his immediate design to make. The whole subject receives larger treatment in chapters 18, 19, 20 and 23 of the second volume of my work "Christian Doctrine Harmonized," in which last chapter, likewise, will be found the true philosophy of Christian prayer and a vindication of the thesis that the entire cosmic movement is ruled by the requirements of God's moral government, in which alone is its *final cause.*

ity. The need which was first apparent in those times to affirm against all impugners the doctrine of his divinity had led many, in order to maintain it, to ignore, or not to perceive, what was essential in the definition of his humanity; and only step by step were those forms of doctrine fenced off which virtually denied his humanity by impairing the notion of what essential humanity is. And the difficulties for the mind which are found in the entire problem, wherein contrasts have to be reconciled, have always induced a predisposition to cut short the enquiry by emphasizing the Divinity to such an extent as to lose sight of the truth that there was and must have been a kenosis, or limitation of the divine element in Jesus' personality, or to pare away this latter doctrine unduly. Thus, then and ever since, there has been manifest a disposition to fall back upon the monophysitic ground, and to make assertions, if which are true, the doctrine of his humanity has undergone degradation, and thereby the definition of his divinity itself has been impaired, as I shall presently proceed to show.

But the conciliar decisions of the church are

with us in this statement. They will bear the scrutiny of speculative thinking, and may on this account be safely trusted, as well as because they represent the clarified Christian consciousness, and thus have objective authority. These, in terms suited to the exigencies of their times, declared the doctrine of our Lord's complete humanity, and defined it against the immediate impugners. But humanity cannot be defined in few words, and new and subtle enquiries still started up; and as each age had to do its own thinking to appropriate that of its predecessors, the disposition still remained to torture the definition of his humanity to fit the supposed requirements of his divinity, and it remains still. Not a year passes in which may not be found in the religious periodicals utterances, honestly meant to do honor to our Lord Christ, which are only self-consistent on the presuppositions of a monophysitic scheme of doctrine, and, in some cases, those of the Nestorian scheme. This question, then, of the extent of Jesus' knowledge, or the extent of his ignorance (since it has to be answered so far as is needful to avoid the difficulties in the way of reaching a harmonized theologic system),

requires for its elucidation and sufficient reply that we bring up for examination afresh the doctrine of his humanity on the one side, and on the other the doctrine of kenosis, or the self-limitation required for the Incarnation.

Man is a spiritual soul—as *soul* related to the material universe, as spiritual soul related to pure spirit—thus related on the one side to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as pure spirit, and on the other side to the Divine Doxa, as synthesized by spirit. As made in the image of God, and his highest possible creature, he is morally free, and comes, sooner or later, to know himself to be all this. Allowing everything else to determinism, he is his own creator as to the moral form, and must come up to all the requirements of a moral being. To attain real freedom, and the perfect liberty required for a permanent form of life, he must undergo development, in which his own will is an efficient. He rises out of the abyss of the unconscious, quickened by a divine act, and is at the start immortal, because he is moral, and has to determine his moral *status* during his development, which is both physical and mental as well as moral, all these three elements of it

conditioning each other. Thus his knowledge is a gradual growth, conditioned by all these relations. It follows and is graded by his experience, and constitutes the light by which he frames motives or ends which determine his activity and hence his moral form. These decisions of will affect immediately the content of his consciousness, and remotely, and perhaps immediately, too, his physical being. These, then, as well as the parallel social changes, become part of his environment, and thus make more complex the conditions under which his moral history proceeds. By the use of his freedom the content of his intelligence is affected. It would not be difficult to show that by his moral recession, or wrong choice of ends, his being is impoverished and narrowed, and that by his right choice and moral advance it is enriched and amplified. His knowledge, then, must be affected accordingly. In the one case, some springs or possibilities of knowledge may dry up; in the other case, they may be loosened to flow more freely; or new ones may be started, and latent possibilities quickened to become realities. In the case of the right moral progress, the knowledge clarifies itself,

and becomes truer and truer. Retrogressions become less and less likely or possible. The avenues of his complex soul-structure, through which any subtle, mystical influences may reach him, become freer and freer. Thus he is gradually enabled to hold all essential truth in proper synthesis. The vibration between the *a priori* evidence for the postulates of his moral consciousness and history, for the "things unseen," on the one hand, and, on the other, the *a posteriori* doubts which the sensuous understanding presents (which vibration constitutes his trial, and measures the degree of his faith), still remains as the condition for its own ultimate subsidence; that is, the victory of faith at length carries the subject beyond the need of this trial and struggle, and the vibration slowly subsides. Yet his trials, and the consequent need of his interior vigor, may grow more intense and require the uttermost exercise of his persistence toward the end, and thus, by this triumphing persistence, the final influx of vigor is reached, as the condition for the removal of all his doubts and trials.

If this be a definition of humanity, and so far a description of the essential human career,

and man's ideal destiny so far as the sojourn on earth is concerned, the Son of God, in becoming human, must have become, must have passed through, all this. If he missed anywhat that is to befall one whose moral development proceeds without retrogression, that is, is *sinless*, he missed what is highest and finest in humanity, and cannot be thought to have been truly human. To suppose in him the full divine consciousness at the start is to deny the fact of his human development, or give it a Doketic form. He no longer appears in what is the highest human characteristic, and our sense of fellowship with him is lost. To suppose that the divine element led along passively the human, is again to degrade the latter, and lower our conception of the former. The Incarnation shows, in its highest definition, as an exhibition of the divine love, rather than as an exhibition of the divine power. And this love is shown in his self-limitation, which made his sacrifice of himself possible. Hence his knowledge, to be a true human knowledge, must have been attained, as ours is attained, through human organs, and have been, as ours, a gradual growth. He must have passed through every phase of

human consciousness, except as it has been modified by the contradiction,—even the infantile one, where empirical knowledge exists not,—and all the stages whereby the results of sensation, perception, conception and comprehension are wrought up into knowledge. Information as to facts and events must have been gained as ours is gained, and through the same *media*. He was determined by heredity, through his mother, and thus retains organic connection with the human race, and is a part of its history. He was determined also by his environment, as we are, and showed the results of it in his mode of speaking. His education and experience were those of a Jew.

To think that all this was pretended, or a disguise, and that the full divine consciousness existed beneath, and that omnipotence was voluntarily refrained from exercise, is, again, either Doketism or a form of Nestorianism. The human consciousness is either pretended, or exists side by side with the divine one, and we have a double personality and no true union.

If, then, his empirical knowledge was gained as ours is, how rash is it for anyone to say that it was unlimited, or to make any arbitrary limi-

tation ; as those do who declare that ignorance can only be predicated of him as pertaining to the few occasions when he confessed it. They who do so cannot explain why it should have been confined to these particulars alone ; and if they fall back upon the *a priori* assumption that his divinity must be thought as requiring in him unlimited knowledge, then his divine consciousness must have been willfully darkened, and the honesty of his declaration must undergo suspicion. It would be just as valid an argument or assertion for one who declares the contrary to fall back upon the *a priori* ground of his humanity, and ask to be shown how any superhuman knowledge was possible unless by dividing his consciousness and thinking him as living a double life. It is as valid to assume his human ignorance as it is to assume his divine omniscience. Both assertions are shallow, and the profounder problem is to show how far the divine consciousness has undergone limitation, and how far the human has undergone modification, expansion and exaltation, and to reconcile these in a consistent synthesis, if possible.

The endeavor may be well meant to do honor

to our Lord as divine by all this insistence upon the scantily limited extent of his knowledge; but it fails of its end, for, as before, his divinity appears in a profounder definition and comes nearer to our hearts by the limitation than by the exhibition of omniscience. It is shown not so clearly by the divine aloofness—for as omnipotent God is still far off—as by his nearness, by his lovingly submitting to human conditions, for in this region man may meet him. *Our power* is borrowed, and may shrink into nonentity, but our *love* is immortal and may be boundless, when called forth by the Divine Love. Moreover, love in its perfection is creative. It *must* go beyond itself. As the mutual recognition of the Father and the Son shows love for the first, in thought, existing, it is at once, in thought, active, whereby the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds, and a universe may issue. So when love in its purity and perfection in man, responsive to the love of God, comes to be, it, too, is creative; which is what St. Peter meant when he said that we should share the divine Φὺσις.

But there is another side to all this argument concerning the knowledge of Jesus. While,

on the one hand, his knowledge was human and gained through the same *media* as ours is, it was more than simply human, was ideally human, and thus, in a sense, superhuman. It is not to be denied that there is a Charybdis on the other side of this Scylla, and that we may contemplate in thought his humanity so abstractly as not to see that it was modified *at the start* by the entrance of divinity into human development. Here now, and for the first, occur any real difficulties in the endeavor to reach satisfying conclusions.

There is no room here for the exhibition of the grounds upon which it must be held as axiomatic that the consciousness of the Eternal Son, as such, was unbroken ; that the consciousness of his relation to the Eternal Father, and of himself as undergoing kenosis by the limitation of the transcendent attributes of omniscience and omnipotence, was perennial, was a thread of unbroken continuity. Hence that, as such, it existed *ab initio*, and at the lowest stage of human development. Nor is there room for the elaboration of the thesis that in the rudimentary consciousness of the quickened human germ—in the primal sensations felt as

internal change, yet soon discovered to be imparted *ab extra*—there is implicit the principle of causality, afterward to be recognized as the governing law in all mental activity and history, which cannot be escaped from, and which is the *substratum* from which arises the knowledge and the growing idea of God.

Postulating these, we find ourselves obliged to think, or assume, the coalescence, in the incarnation of the Eternal Son, of the divine consciousness with the rudimentary human one, thus conserving the unipersonality,—the Divine being thus limited to the uttermost of the possibility of its limitation. But from this very coalescence the pure rudimentary consciousness of the infant must receive modification. We may think, then, that the infantile recognition of a power *ab extra* (for the simplest sensation is not self-caused, and is therefore still *ab extra*), when thus affected by the coalescence with it of the Divine, assumes the form of felt and responsive love. Thus what is most divine is retained, and there is no break in its continuity, by the Eternal Son taking human form. We may think, too, that even though all empirical knowledge be wanting,

the impetus and the ruling idea, and the final cause of all creation, by means of which alone all empirical knowledge is explained, and has any permanent significance, is felt and is an element in such consciousness. Here, indeed, understanding, or rather imagination, the reproductive power, using the material of empirical knowledge, is impotent, since we cannot transport ourselves into the infantile consciousness. But thus much remains for pure thought, and of the consciousness of the child Jesus we can think that the Eternal Son knows himself as loved by and loving the Eternal Father; and since having from love undergone limitation, and the obscuration of knowledge, or rather the reduction of it to its primal form, still knows himself as loving the universe, regarded in its fundamental meaning; and as love was the impetus of its creation, and realized love its final cause, thus knows himself as its upholding principle. To trace the illumination of the developing infantile consciousness by this divine modification, in the preservation of the unipersonality, must, as I have said, elude comprehension or trustworthy imaginative reproduction, but it can be thought—

yet it must be so thought as to involve no contradiction, and still to retain what is essential to the idea of the human. Here we have the ideally human as well as the actually human, the latter coming before our vision, the former held in pure thought. It is forbidden to think that in the Incarnate One the powers of the human were transcended. That is concealed Monophytism, again. But the latent and possible powers of the human are availed of; and it is seen in Jesus of what humanity is capable, and we have a unique form of consciousness, which we call divine-human. The moment one endeavors to make predications concerning it at any point of his career, the temptation is very great to trust to one's understanding, or to follow a logical process, without the needful dialectic; and hence we may have dogmatic assertions concerning our Lord's consciousness which are entirely unauthorized. At the best, he must seem to us something of an enigma, but one finally to be solved, and the solution will be gained step by step.

His knowledge, then, before his death, cannot be thought as perfect, if it was attained, as all human knowledge is, in the course of

human development. Hence his confession that there is not present in his mind the intended career through which his Father is leading him, and he can pray that the cup may pass from him; and he cannot put in chronological sequence and fill up the details of what is to be passed through before the final consummation. Had he had intuition of this, his loving sacrifice and spiritual strength would have been less, and we could not love him as we do. Our very notion of his divinity would be lower than it is.

But while, like ours, his empirical knowledge was a growth, and therefore deficient until the last, there must also have been in him, perennially, a form of knowledge deeper and truer than our actual knowledge. His intuition of the divine idea, the one purpose which runs through and unifies all history, the inner meaning of all change or development, and the key to read it aright, was true, incessant and infallible, and did not require anything to be rethought. This would seem almost a corollary from the fact of the sinless outook. The distorting mists which arise out of the abyss of unlovingness are not present here. He may

not have known every event of the world's history, but when it was understood, he knew infallibly its inner meaning; and this not as the absolute divine omniscience, but as knowledge possible for human faculties when sanctified and purified. In this *wisdom*, which is more than knowledge, we have no warrant for saying that it was ever deficient. His mind may have been darkened so far as it was understanding, as we learn by his utterances in Gethsemane and on the cross, but so far as it was the pure reason clarified by love, there is no evidence that there was ever any defect. Hence we refer to his words as the words of God in everything pertaining to man's true essential life. They are for us a refuge from all human obscurations, and deeper than our excogitated philosophies. We weary of what these say, but never of what he said. They are the food and the fountain of our spiritual strength.

This intuition of the idea which rules the development of the universe, and which need not be, in human progress, necessarily accompanied by exhaustive or even far-extended empirical knowledge, is a true philosophic attitude, which, when clothing itself in language to satis-

fy one's own understanding or that of others, and to gratify the imagination, becomes the poetic attitude. We see it illustrated in the mental procedure of the world's great poets, and notably in the instance of Dante. Here we have all the empirical knowledge of his time, ruled by the categories of time and space, used as symbolic of the abstract moral or religious condition of man. It is the thought veiled beneath events expressed in symbol.

Thus, too, Jesus' descriptions of the prospective ruin of Jerusalem, and, in the same connection, of the events which are to occur at the period of the final consummation, are used as symbols of the idea or process of judgment, or discrimination and separation. This is the poetic attitude, which is so far identical with the prophetic attitude, in whose utterance, generally, language breaks down and shows its inadequacy. Language is the offspring of the material universe, so far as it has come within our knowledge, and not until that knowledge is perfect will language ever be an infallible mode of expression, and enable for others the full intuition of the idea.

When, concerning the knowledge or the in-

tuitions of Jesus, we use the word *inspired*, if we mean to adhere to the strict meaning of the word, we do not mean by it the direct divine omniscience, mechanically or otherwise imparted, but knowledge that is mediated by the Holy Spirit acting upon the human organs of knowledge ; and this suggests another effort of thought to discover, if possible, the mode of the Holy Spirit's mediation, and how human knowledge is or may be affected thereby. If we cannot reach full satisfaction here, we may, at least, find what it is not, and therefore within what limits we must think.

If Jesus passed through human development it was moral and religious as well as mental and physical. Postulating his innocence or sinlessness, his moral development would consist in the acquisition of spiritual strength, and for this it would be needful that he should undergo and resist temptation. And as moral experience, on analysis, proves to have religious implications, his development was also religious. The motive spring of his moral obedience was a religious one. It was love responding to the love of the Father and proving that it was this by overflowing upon the human race. That it

was religious is proven by his constant prayerful attitude towards the Almighty Father. What was in his mind during these frequent communions with the Father we are not told. His uttered prayers were such as his disciples could understand, and we see that these, and hence we may infer that all his prayers were related both to the providential and to the mystical processes of the divine government. He could pray for relief from suffering, and he could pray for the grace needful to sustain him in bearing it. The gift of such grace is the activity and influence of the Holy Spirit. His disciples pray similarly for providential change, and for mystical influence, for the light and aid and comfort of the Holy Spirit. If this influence is mystical, *i.e.* beneath understanding, through what *media* does it reach us, and what is the limit possible for analysis here?

We are accustomed, in our Christian theology, to refer all exercise of energy in the movement of the physical universe to the Holy Spirit. Its mechanical, chemical and vital motions and changes are all referable to the same source. In the incoming of every new idea, superinduced upon the antecedent ones, the new one avails

of all former ones, and subdues them, and the forces they display, to realize its own end or final cause. Thus the chemical overrules the mechanical movement, and the vital movement subdues or suspends for a time both the others. We have valid ground for affirming that the moral movement dominates all three, and conquers all the system of lower forces to its own end. But I will not enter into that argument now and here.* Slowly all these movements and their correlations come before our apprehension and become knowledge. But the primal energy which starts and sustains them all, dividing itself into forces, or modes of motion, whose contests and *equilibria* make all concrete things and their changes, is one and the same, can be traced back to nothing else than to pure will and idea, and therefore cannot come within the categories of the understanding. We see the activity of the Holy Spirit by its result, from which we are obliged to infer it; but we can only imagine it by thinking the power to use or direct the forces, of which *we* possess a little, and which is ruled by our will, to be unlimited. What *we* have may

*See Chapter xxiii, Vol. 2, in my work 'Christian Doctrine Harmonized."

be lost, but the abstract power cannot be lost, for this would be to think away all existence.

If, then, the energy ruling the motions of the physical universe is thus mystical and eludes the understanding, any exercise of it for a higher end, to produce moral and religious change, must be also mystical, and be only seen in its results. All Christians declare that there are such results, discoverable in their characters, their motives, their strength, their emotions. And Christianity, and all it has wrought in the world and for the individual man, is such a result. The Holy Spirit, then, must work upon the existing ground, the complex of forces, which in a degree we know, to accomplish the higher end. The intent and purpose is to strengthen the moral and religious will, and carry on the process which is to result in moral or religious perfection. Through what *media* is this influence wrought? Through which of the constituents of humanity is the end reached,—through the abstract physical, or the abstract mental, or the abstract emotional, or if through all three, in what order? What modification of the consciousness is possible to accomplish this required strength of

will, and by what processes is it thus modified? Is it (1) something utterly apart from all previous modes of energy, superadded to them, and hence entirely inexplicable; or (2) does it operate in and through these, and is so far identified with them; or (3) are the two co-ordinated and together constitute the activity? These questions may, perhaps, be better understood by presenting a concrete case, which will suggest these enquiries. If a Christian man prays for light and strength, for ability to see what his duty is, and for strength to adhere to it, how is such a prayer answered? We may indeed conceive that light and strength may reach him through providential means, by some aid supplied *ab extra*, by which the mental vision is clarified. But if this does not come, and if any mystical influence is possible, how does it reach him? Is (1) the influence brought to bear upon the will direct, imparting strength, or (2) upon some feeling or emotion imparting stimulus and intensity, or (3) upon the thinking principle, quickening its vivid action, bringing into play powers ordinarily dormant, and through this process giving to the ideal end such attractiveness that it becomes a moral

force drawing toward itself, and thus elicits the human response and activity by the exhibition of the Divine Love? An extended critique might be made of the two former hypotheses, the result of which would show that we know of no such thing as will abstracted from thought and emotion, and which can be acted upon directly; nor do we know of any emotion that can be abstracted from the thought which has supplied its object. Dismissing these, then, as untenable, we bring up for examination the third hypothesis, and ask, if the influence is upon and through the thinking principle, how is it reached? But the mind itself is what it is by virtue of its relations bodyward, as well as spiritward, and cannot be rightly thought if neglecting these relations. Is the mind reached, then, and the consciousness affected through the medium of the physical relations solely, by influence upon the body or the brain, by which the abnormal physical proclivities are reached and weakened, and the mental vision thus freed from perturbation; or is the mind reached from the spirit side, by spirit communing or coalescing with spirit? Scrutinizing carefully human experience, it seems that all moral and religious

advance comes by clarification of the pure thought movement by which motives are framed. From this it would seem to follow that the mental is the mediating element in human action connecting the physical and the spiritual elements. Take a concrete case again. It is no conquest over a perverted physical appetite, which is reached through the weakening of that appetite by some mystical influence. The moral worth is lost; and this may show that the influence of the Holy Spirit is not upon our physical being as purely physical, but only avails of this so far as is needful to produce mental change. For it *is* a conquest of a perverted physical appetite which is reached through some vivification of an ideal presentation having higher attractiveness, whereby we draw away from and resist the perversion of the physical appetite. The two present moral alternatives, and the power of good has overcome the power of evil. We infer, then, that the Holy Spirit acts upon the human will through an illumination made in the realm of ideas. Moral and religious ideas exist in all human souls, as such; dim and obscured it may be, but still there, and may, in

every degree, be clarified and made influential. To accomplish this is not to add new powers to the human being, but to bring out his latent powers and capacities, to show of what he is capable, and what is the right interpretation of his aspirations. How, then, are these ideas of God, of one's self as free and responsible, of the ideal end, or one's normal destiny; these, which are the spring of all moral movement, how are they to be illumined? Is (1) the energy in activity through physical *media*, freeing from clogs and perturbations the brain-movement, quickening its activity, intensifying its penetrative power, and enlarging its comprehension; or (2) is it by direct action upon the pure psychical consciousness existing beneath the brain-movement, and which an enquiry into the facts of human sleep and dreaming may authorize us to infer is a continuous and unbroken thread, which constitutes our personal identity? To adopt the first solution would throw upon us the immense task of accounting for all that occurs in man from physical antecedents only; an attempt which has never been successful, and against which all spiritual philosophy and the utterances of the

Christian Scriptures are a protest; which contend or imply that man is a true universal, and that existence is wider than our knowledge, that man reflects what is unknown as well as what is known. The moral idea itself disappears, or is shown to be baseless, unless the physical changes of the universe are for a moral end, and are ruled by the purpose of the latter. This is the contention of rival philosophies, the one holding that physical changes alone produce the (so called) moral results, the other that a moral aim rules all physical changes. Unless this latter were the truth, all prayer would be illegitimate.

It may indeed be questioned whether spirit ever does or can act direct upon spirit, and without *media*, seeing that the divine glory is God's own medium to accomplish all creaturely existence and communication with the same. But it cannot be thence inferred that the determinations of the divine glory, which constitute our known universe, exhaust its possibilities of determination; otherwise we should have to think all angelic life, and the life of souls after death, as under human physical conditions still. We hold, then, that we may rightly

think determinations of the divine glory below our knowledge, therefore mystical, and that through these and by acting upon the human sub-consciousness, beneath the brain-movement, the Holy Spirit effects whatever change is required : which conclusion is strictly scriptural.

What degree of such influence, then, entitles it to be, in its result, called *Inspiration?* In the sense above given, all Christians are inspired, and upon this must be built whatever further inspiration is possible. That the distinction is one of degree, and not of kind, is shown by the fact that the results of such inspiration, as discovered in the utterances of Jesus, and of the New Testament writers, can be measurably, and by degrees entirely, followed, apprehended, thought and made practical by the Christian mind. If they could not be, they would be inoperative, would be as words in a foreign language, and could not be called truths, till some correspondent thought or meaning came to pass. But it does not follow that the comprehension of the same can be at once complete and exhaustive ; rather, that the Christian mind must be stimulated, and beck-

oned on step by step. Truth is uttered in language always symbolic, more or less inadequate, and is bit by bit appropriated. Nor does any quickening of the sub-consciousness, whereby new truth is seized and assimilated, take place in man as purely passive. It respects and is conditioned by his moral status and capacity, and nowhere overrules his mental idiosyncrasy. Yet moral and religious growth, developing this idiosyncrasy, must enable one more and more readily to detect the truth thus expressed by symbols, whether language or vision. The domination over language cannot be at its uttermost unless the empirical knowledge, from whose material language is constructed, is also exhaustive. Any imperfection in one implies imperfection in the other. And this shows that language is never an absolutely adequate vehicle for the communication of truth. Jesus' language is accounted for by his historical antecedents. If not perfect, it implies that his empirical knowledge was not perfect, but both were acquired gradually in the course of human development. But of the absolute truth, which underlies and explains all facts, we may hold, as I have shown, that he had intuition. By

means of this he could see more and more clearly the meaning of all human history, as the facts of this history passed into his knowledge, though still enough of darkness remained to make possible his trials, his confession of ignorance, his exclamations in Gethsemane and upon the cross.

We may regard, then, the inspiration of the Scripture-writers as similar to his. It was, thus, an outlook from the same centre, but less extensive than his, since limited and determined by the immediate providential purpose. The action of the Holy Spirit upon them must have respected this immediate purpose, and thus was guiding and overruling. That they were thus guided is shown as much by their reticence as by their affirmations. That the authors of the Synoptical Gospels, setting themselves to the task of reminiscence, or of compilation from existing memoranda, should have contented themselves with these simple narratives, should have refrained from all speculations, should have given us no information or conjecture as to the life of Jesus before he began to exercise his ministry, except of the occurrence in the Temple during his childhood (which occurrence

has profound theologic significance), and that they should have interspersed no comments of their own upon the events they record, is an instance of restraint that confirms our belief of a providential or mystical overruling, and that they were guided what *not* to say. On this account, also, we may have confidence in what they *said*, though there is always room for the critical enquiry whether what they wrote has been correctly transmitted.

Nor can it be maintained that inspiration, or inward illumination of essential truth, is necessarily accompanied by such domination over language as infallibly to secure its correct appreciation by others. The defect may be in the vehicle as well as in the recipient; for the vehicle is not the author as a passive organ, but one having his own history and his own idiosyncrasy. To detect a unified system of truth in the utterances of such men is the after-work of theology, or the meditative Christian consciousness; for which, too, the influence of the Holy Spirit, or inspiration in a lower degree, is still required. If so, and the difference between these writers and the ordinary illumined Christian intelligence is one of degree and not of

kind, then we may think that the ultimate result of Christian progress and mental attainment will have slowly diminished this difference of degree, and that the intelligence of the last generation will have appropriated all the thought of these men, and be identical with theirs. In the interval, that Christian intelligence should sometimes err in the subjective holding, follows as a matter of course.

These inspired men were divinely enabled to think from a deeper centre, and so have a wider range, though the clarity and extent of their outlook must have been ruled by the immediate providential purpose. The divine guidance did not render them omniscient, but respected the divine purpose only. We are by no means authorized to think that the authors of the Synoptical Gospels were enabled to penetrate as deeply into the profound and far-reaching words of Jesus as St. John was, whose mind the Holy Spirit ruled for quite another purpose. Thus the difference between the Synoptical Gospels and that of St. John did not depend simply and only upon difference of experience and culture, but as well upon the influence of the Holy Spirit for different pur-

poses. In the case of the three evangelists, the general Chrstian intelligence had not been developed far enough to make the language possible for them a sufficient organ of transmission, as it came to be in the cases of St. Paul, of the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, and of St. John. Thus the Holy Spirit follows and adapts his activity to human mental growth, and does not anticipate and lead it along passively. Man is not degraded but elevated in our regard by this divine procedure. Yet the fundamental truth which underlies the utterances of these men is identical. They do not contradict one another in their intuitions, however they may differ in their mediated knowledge,—which is another proof of a divine overruling. This absolute internal harmony is the most convincing proof of their inspiration.

LECTURE II.

THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT.

Theology, in dealing with the doctrine of Atonement (by which word is meant the changed relation between God and man, accomplished as result by the sacrifice of Christ), has made but slow advance. What has been gained has been chiefly negative; that is, the insufficiency of the many tentatives to incorporate this doctrine into a self-coherent theologic system has been made manifest. If satisfaction for the co-ordinating mind is ever reached, no doubt it will be seen that the true regard of it has been unconsciously held and taken for granted, or instinctively divined, all the while; and the evidence of this may be looked for in Christian literature, and will be found quite as much, or more, in the naive devotional or poetic utterances as in the more deliberate systematic effusions.

But something positive, also, has been gained by the discovery, or the suspicion, that the method pursued in the investigation has been a

wrong one, or, at least, an incomplete one. The problem has been taken up as an abstract one, or an isolated one, disconnected from its proper theologic antecedents. The various texts of the New Testament directly referring to this doctrine have been gathered together and a system sought to be elicited from them; to make which sufficient, certain abstract presuppositions have been quietly assumed without examining or proving their validity; or, otherwise, some one of the scriptural expressions denoting the *result* of the atoning sacrifice has been taken and made the key by which to explain all the others. Thus, redemption, reconciliation, satisfaction, have been successively taken as thoughts from which to evolve systems, with results plausible and accepted for a time, but whose unsatisfactoriness has been at length made manifest. For illustration: we have the old Patristic theory, that man was bought out of his bondage to Satan by paying to the Prince of Evil the price of the death of Christ, this equivalent being given to make the scales of justice even. This is the theory which, carried to its extreme length, gave rise to utterances that seem to us, now, absurd and almost

ridiculous. That this theory, in this and the milder forms, had a basis of truth is not to be denied; but that as a form of the doctrine of atonement it should have had vitality for so many centuries, and at length be abandoned, not without struggles, as untenable, shows that the speed of human speculative thought was very slow at first, and has since undergone progressive acceleration.

Again: we have the Anselmic theory, in which the death of Christ is supposed to have special value over and above his life of sacrificial obedience, and is, on this account, regarded as a tribute to the divine Justice, needful to be paid that the divine Mercy might flow forth. The offshoots from this theory, in the earlier and later Calvinistic schemes, and in many of the treatises of Roman and Reformed theology, have been based upon the assumed validity of this same abstract principle of justice. Thus, the old Patristic theory, on the one side, and the Anselmic theory and its offshoots on the other, which at first regard seem to be antagonistic, are found to be fundamentally in agreement, since based upon the same notion of justice, as an absolute principle, whose

requirements are imperious. The language of this has all along been infecting, and is still affecting, the utterances of Anglican theology.

There is another class of theories, which deny the need of maintaining any transcendent efficacy in the death of Christ for loosing man from his bondage to sin and annulling its penal results, and make its virtue consist solely in the influence wrought thereby upon human consciousness, either to terrify or to attract and win him,—thus that it has simply moral fitness and no ontological necessity. That there is an element of truth in this all other systems whatever are willing to admit; but it is too easy a solution, too superficial to meet the scrutiny of profound thought. It has failed to satisfy, chiefly because it is manifest that the Scripture-writers had in their minds something other and deeper than all this.

Still another class of thinkers, well represented by the Roman Catholic theologian Pabst, acknowledging that the sacrifice of Christ must be thought to have ontological virtue and results, so emphasize the sacrificial obedience pervading his life, tracing it back to the divine self-limitation involved in the

incipient Incarnation itself, as to leave for thought no special significance or necessity for his *death*, except as the culmination of his moral or religious obedience. That it is, indeed, such a culmination is obvious; but so far as this theory enlightens us, the mind to die would appear sufficient, and the actual death not indispensably necessary. Its profound significance as part of the human career is not brought out, nor sufficient warrant given for the scriptural expressions. We need still to know why the actual death must ensue in order that the intended result may be brought about.

Others, again, maintaining the necessity of his death, explain it from the assumed validity of some physical principle, which originated these ontological results—a scheme which requires an inversion of every spiritual philosophy, subordinates the moral to the physical, and makes the relations of the latter primal and paramount.

Turning away from all these theories, other theologians pursue their enquiries by the historic method, and study the sacrifices of the older dispensation, to discover what they can

from the same of the divine intent and meaning, and carry this light with them to illumine the enquiry into the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ. These sacrificial rites are discovered or assumed to have an educational or religious value, intended to prepare the mind of the chosen people for what was to be fully recognized when the sacrifice of Christ should be proclaimed as redemptive. Thus, these sacrifices and Christ's sacrifice likewise, are part of an economic system, a part of the providential treatment. Thus this view, as well as some of the former ones, inspires a mental leaning towards, and allies itself very readily with, the notion so long and persistently held, that there was no absolute necessity for the incarnation and the sacrifice of Christ, but only moral fitness; or that this method for human recovery could be traced back no further than to an arbitrary decree of God. Many of the most eminent Patristic and mediæval theologians (Anselm being a notable exception) content themselves with regarding the method for human recovery as only one of many possible methods by which it could have been accomplished. Closely scrutinized, this notion either

refers human recovery ultimately rather to the power than to the love of God, or ignores that love is a moral necessity, and, by introducing an element of arbitrariness into the divine character, lowers instead of exalting our idea of the One Supreme. Thus, in speculating upon the divine freedom, as in similar speculations upon human freedom, the will is thought as separate from the nature, and not as its necessary expression. I hope that it will appear, in what I shall say, that, given certain postulates, namely, God being what he is, and man being what he is, and their actual relations what they are, no other mode of human recovery is thinkable, or was possible, than that by which it was effected; that it flows in due course from the true idea of God and from the immutable constitution of the universe.

This whole study of the older dispensation, and of its sacrificial rites in particular, is very well in its place, and must become a part of an exhaustive treatment of the entire doctrine, but I regard it, as availed of by many, as a reversal of the true method. It is required to supplement, and should not be used to be supplemented by, an enquiry into the significance

of the death of Christ himself, to discover if it has not other necessity than its economical fitness. The antitype can never be fully understood by the study of the type. History is only rightly understood when studied in the light of its final cause. The immediate intent of these prescribed sacrificial rites was the removal of temporal disabilities and the restoration of religious privileges, and they were thus made indispensable for the promised divine favor and blessing. The entire transactions belong to the temporal sphere, though they have the further and less immediate result of sustaining and advancing the religious education of the chosen people. They were mediately and not immediately moral prescriptions. But, as ritual, they prefigure, on a lower plane, what was to take place on a higher plane, with far other results. The final cause of the sacrifice of Christ was an ontological change. It was to reverse the movement of the universe, so far as it can come within human knowledge, or to introduce a harmonizing process. It was to start the return current of human history back to God. To study it one has to look into the very depths of the divine

philosophy. Then, if we can find its place in the whole scheme of the divine dealings with humanity, we may look backward and see how it was reflected by anticipation in these prefigurative rites. Then, too, we may make use of the analogies suggested by these to throw back the reflected light and increase the brightness of that from which it was reflected.

This method, while a true and valuable one, should occupy the second place, and not the first place, in an exhaustive enquiry or treatment. What should be done first is to see what doctrine of sacrificial atonement must flow out of its theological antecedents, *e. g.*, to study the incarnation itself in the form which it took in consequence of human dereliction (whereby it had to be redemptive and regenerative as well as elevating and beatific), so as to see that the death of Christ is a necessary moment in the process. This may be called an *a priori* method, but the enquiry proceeds from antecedents which facts, philosophy and revelation unite in confirming, and is not a process of deduction from any assumed and abstract principle or proposition.

Such a principle is assumed in all those

schemes of doctrine which make the death of Christ a tribute to the divine justice. This has been taken as an absolute principle, having its own imperious requirements, without establishing the validity of such an assumption, without looking for the origin of the conception in human thought.

If justice were an absolute principle, we should be able to think it as belonging to the Godhead itself, irrespective of any created universe (if this be thought as a free creation, occurring in time); but there is no room for such a conception in the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; nor is there any room for it when creation is superadded. Not until intelligent life, human freedom, and the possibility of moral distinctions appear in the universe is there any room for such a principle. If we can think man as not sinning, as true to his moral allegiance, and as normally developed from his pristine innocence till he should reach moral indefectibility, there is still no room for it. The beneficence of God in adapting man's environment to his progressive changes, with all its result of blessing, the gift of a larger liberty, and the opening

of new sluices of enjoyment, is only Love. But when the contradiction of sin comes to be, then love itself becomes justice, and the divine providential treatment divides itself into two streams, blessing or punishing (but still with regard to the ideal and organic unity of the race), blessing or punishing according as the human response is loving or unloving, and faint or strong in either category. Thus is revealed the immutable constitution of the known universe, and that all physical well-being and mental expansion flow sooner or later, and by pathways not entirely untraceable, in the train of moral obedience, or responsive love; and all ill-being, suffering and impoverishment of resources in the train of moral transgression—this, too, partially visible as well as necessarily thinkable. That in the onward flow the innocent suffer for the sin of the guilty, is not to be explained by any doctrine of substitution (a resort of the logical mind to rest in a premature solution), in which justice is made an unmoral attribute, a mathematical principle, which by no ingenuity can be reconciled with the divine love. If one ever

voluntarily suffers for the fault of another, in ordinary human experience, it is because of the effect such substitution may have upon the mind of that other, or upon the mind of someone else having the power to inflict suffering. It is an arbitrary assent, and has no moral significance or fitness. There is no possibility of making them equivalents, especially as the suffering cannot be judged and graded by its objective form, but only by the capacity of the sufferer. What would be heavy for one would be light for another, and thus, even in this superficial respect, the scale is not balanced. We all know of the absurd attempts to make the suffering of Christ an equivalent for the suffering due to the elect—a solution which was reached by the tyranny of logic, or else was a confession of mental impotence, and declined the enquiry into what kind of suffering was *not* possible for Jesus, and what *was* possible, and which thus obscured our conception of his love. That one does and should suffer on account of the sin of another is a corollary from the doctrine of the organic unity of the human race, a scriptural doctrine to which science is yearly

adding new confirmations, and which, when scrutinized, enlarges our conception of the divine idea for man, and brings out new richness and beauty. Thus justice, in the human mind, appears as an *a posteriori* inference, and may be seen to be simply the form which the divine love takes in consequence of the dereliction. Even when it punishes it is seen to be indirectly recuperative in its intent, and when it chastises it is seen to be directly remedial. No inference drawn from God's treatment of his creatures which carries us around to a contradiction of his love is valid, any more than is any inference which contradicts man's moral independence.

If there be valid speculative ground for holding what is called "The Scotist Doctrine of the Incarnation" (and we acknowledge that there is not valid scriptural ground to erect it into a dogma, yet that the New Testament affords no contradiction), and that it was the divine intent for man that he should reach apotheosis, for which a new act of divine creative interference was needful,

then it would follow that death was no part of the divine intent for man—did not enter into the essential idea of man. His very spiritual relation, which made him more than animal, implied that he should not be bound by this law of all other animal life. (But this ultimate elevation, when humanity should have reached fitness for still another step upward, could not be called *a regeneration*, except in a secondary sense, the same as if the irradiation of the animal soul by spirit elements should be called *a regeneration*.) The moral and religious principle, having acquired sufficient spiritual strength, having proved itself adequate to triumph over the lower forces, and having maintained itself in the existing relation to the universe would at length have become "eternal life." Death is an abnormality, and the result of the moral defection. *Then*, when sin entered the world, man began to die. The spiritual principle was weakened, and human vitality must ultimately succumb. The human career now becomes something other. A changed relation to the environment becomes necessary and actual. Thus man dies and assumes another

set of relations to the outlying universe. We might, as an independent enterprise, show that this new relation to the environment is now a necessary moment in the process which is carrying him on to his perfection, but there is no room here for this.*

We cannot hold that the divine intent for man has been changed by the incoming of the contradiction. He is still to be enabled to fulfill his idea. Hence, as needful for this, the incarnation still occurs, but is now changed in its form. It is still, mediately and remotely, elevating and beatific, but immediately redemptive and regenerative. It has now to carry the weight of a redemptive process to annul the negation; to make, on the one side, sin possible to be forgiven, *i. e.*, to ward off, attenuate and extinguish its consequences, and, on the other, to strengthen the principle of moral obedience or religious love, and, *pari passu* with these, to work changes in the other constituents of the complex

* In some form or other, what is called "The Fall of Man" cannot possibly be declined by anyone who admits the absolute character of moral distinctions. An animal is innocent. Man is not innocent. That whereby he became other than innocent constitutes his fall. If this was necessary, he cannot be blameworthy. That he accuses himself shows that it was not necessary. Historical enquiry will never either deny or confirm this *a priori* conclusion.

human nature, to make it physically and mentally correspondent to the ultimate moral perfection; in other words, to be regenerative.

Thus, to be the seed, or the progenitor of the new human race, the Eternal Son must enter human life in its actual conditions, in order to transmute it. Besides, then, whatever else is required to fulfill the lot of man, he must needs pass through suffering and death. Now, the victory over the lower forces is not to be reached spontaneously, but through effort and struggle. In other words, the divine self-limitation has become sacrificial.

We adopt here the Patristic sense of the word "satisfaction," and use it to denote not a tribute to any abstract principle of justice, but the complacency of the divine mind over the perfect human love which is to bring about the perfected human nature; which perfect human love now appears for the first time in the dying Christ. If this new germ can fructify, and show itself as a form of life in man, it is thus shown to be regenerative. Ideally man is redeemed, and concretely in the progenitor of the new race,

from whom all the consequences of the dereliction pass away. Thus the resurrection of Jesus, and the passing away of all clouds from his consciousness, occur not as the superinduced or arbitrary reward for his moral obedience, but necessarily, as the returning flood of the divine creative activity, which now can move through unobstructed channels. How the results of the redemptive act, and of the completion of the regenerative process, are to reach and be manifested in others, in a subjective and in an objective process, bringing before us the doctrines of Christian faith, on one side, and on the other of the Christian church and sacraments, is an independent and subsequent enquiry. What remains is to show that in order to be redemptive and regenerative the career of Jesus must needs carry him through the article of death,—to exhibit this as indispensable, so as to warrant the emphasis laid upon it by the authors of the New Testament Scriptures, whereby will be seen that in the true sense the divine justice is thereby manifested rather than appeased.

We need, then, to know, first, what death is, so far as is possible to know, *i.e.* to express

it in such terms as will satisfy philosophic thought.

There is no warrant to identify it (as has been done) with the principle of moral evil, as though it were brought about by the energy of an evil spiritual entity; for moral evil is a contradiction rather than a negation, and death, abstractly considered, is a negation and no contradiction. There is no contradiction to reason, or violation of the æsthetic sense, in the fact that death occurs in vegetable or in animal life; rather, in the evolution of the divine ideas, and in the perpetual changes which have occurred in the plant and animal forms of existence, there is food and high gratification for the æsthetic requirements. The contradiction shows itself, first, in animal pain (which has its own explanation, though but a partially satisfying one, since it carries us back to the prior question of the connection of physical with moral evil). Whatever machinery be needed to prolong the existence of a living organism, or to extinguish it, it is simply reducible to the work and the play of the known forces, vital, chemical, mechanical. Disease, which combats vitality, or the

too weak vitality itself, in whatsoever concrete ways this abstract contest proceeds, needs no increment beyond these rival physical forces to explain that death occurs. If it be true that in all animal blood there is a contest between two infinitesimal forms of life, we see that either one of them may be extinguished, and that in every case the chemical force resumes its sway. And although (as is affirmed in our latest science) the primordial cells from which originates animal life have persistent existence, and do not perish by reproduction, as do the differentiated ones when the sexual distinction appears, yet they are not immortal, since they may suffer violence and extinction ; and thus persistent existence is no part of their essential idea.

Death is a fact, and follows all known forms of life, without exception. It means for philosophy that the idea which the divine energy in actualizing is not one that requires immortality as its essential condition. It is part of the process of evolution, of the universal flow which itself exhibits the fertility and the inexhaustible content of the divine thought. Not yet has been lodged in the physical uni-

verse a mode of force, a form of vitality, which can maintain itself persistently against the chemical and mechanical modes of motion; but that such a form of vitality should be possible is the persistent craving of the concrete human being, which thinks and feels that it, as an organism linked to the beautiful universe, ought not to perish, that it is capable of higher things than these. It has aspirations which the fact of death seems to contradict, to crush and extinguish, and thus it appears to human consciousness as the intensest of contradictions. It is for human imagination the cutting loose the bonds which tie the universe, with all its beauty, its resources for knowledge, its gratifications for love, to the soul of man, longing to retain them and make more of them. Though the human soul cannot imagine nor think its own extinction, it can think and imagine its own reduction to poverty by the withdrawal of these resources, and that it may be left to its own memories in a world of shadows, and be able to look in upon itself, and understand itself, as it could not before amid the enticements, the hostilities and the perturbations of the existing

sphere of its experience. And if there remains for thought still the abstract possibility or need of such a relation to an unknown environment as furnishes a medium for spiritual communion, this is still something unknown, a realm where imagination has no food, and can only disport itself therein by bringing back the very relations which have ceased to be. If the human soul has persistent consciousness, it must either undergo this impoverishment of being permanently, or it must, after this *stadium* has fulfilled its purpose, resume its richer and progressive life. This uncertainty ever exists for the thinking soul of man, and it has only been relieved by the one alleged fact of the resurrection, or glorification, of Jesus Christ. When this is taken as a fact, and all doubts of it expire, the human soul starts forward with a new vigor, and shows a deathless enthusiasm. This alone is sufficient to remove the haunting sense of contradiction which has weighted the spiritual soul all along.

Just here we have the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* grounds of Christian belief meeting and coalescing. For the reason, we have the conviction that a form of existence in which

there is no contradiction, and in which the æsthetic sense suffers no violence, is possible. All *instincts* have objective purposes, and the instinct of aspiration, as true as that of self-preservation, has here its objective purpose. For the understanding and reproductive imagination, we have the actual thing exhibited, that one has triumphed over death, and the whole of human aspiration been met. In this concrete case, the supreme condition for this lapsing, or upward flow, into a higher form of life, is the attainment of moral perfection, the growth from the primal innocence into indefectible spiritual strength, the coming to pass such human responsive love to the divine love as can no more be solicited by the human instincts which pertain to the present form of life. Now domination over nature may ensue, and does ensue. We learn the same lesson that death itself teaches, namely, that God will not allow the control of the forces, or the unlimited use of the resources, of his created universe to any creature whose will is not identical with his own, whose love is not strong to meet all shocks, and is not beyond the possibility of shock. Thus life, as a permanent relation,

whose name is, therefore, "eternal life," can only be had by one who is morally perfect. This shows, then, as the divine idea for man, who was not intended to die, could he have retained his moral innocence, and have allowed the spiritual principle to reach its ideal strength. But since this idea was not realized in the first human creation, it *has been* realized in the new creation. When his career is finished, all power in heaven and in earth is given to Jesus Christ.

Before going further, it may be well here to refer to certain ambiguous uses of the word "death," which are neither scientific nor philosophical, which are simply poetical. Theology may avail herself of these only in the latter sense. Death is a fact, made known by experience, which may be used as a figure to express or illustrate abstract cessation of being, or the cessation of any known set of relations whatever. For instance, the phrase "spiritual death" may be used to mean "a death unto righteousness": and we have the antithetical one, "a death unto sin." These expressions are only figurative, in either case. In the former is denoted the possibility that the unloving soul may carry the contradiction so far as

to fix itself irrevocably in the antagonistic attitude: in the latter case is denoted that the sinning propensity may have undergone extinction, or, at least, that the principle has been lodged in the soul which will issue in this result.

Or, again, the expression may have been used as a synonym for annihilation, the passing into nonentity of a spiritual soul. In this case it is a mere set of words which have no meaning, for it is impossible to think the cessation of being of a spiritual soul. If it is self-centred, and morally its own creator, its moral characteristics belong to eternal relations, in which we can think no possibility of change. Even though it has come to be this by a divine creative act, it is on this account an independent entity, however its environment may be narrowed. It determines its own relation to whatever is beyond itself, so far as any ideal end can be set for it, or manufactured by it, out of existing material. Though created, it is itself a creator. God has limited himself to this extent that it has passed beyond his control as to the determination of its moral form. In this is its dignity as the

highest thinkable result of the divine creative activity. If we speak of *death* in connection with it, we mean the cessation of the known relations to the physical universe. Death, strictly speaking, is always, and only, physical; and in the Scriptures, when not used figuratively, it always needs, for the full meaning, to be thought in such connection. Good and evil men both die, but the former have that within them which shall blossom into full life again, and renew the activity upon the physical environment which has been temporarily withdrawn. The latter, too, have been withdrawn from all known relations to the outlying universe. What unknown relations remain or are still possible for them is a question closed for our thought.

And now, to resume our main topic, the question still recurs, why was the death of Christ necessary? If we abandon the thesis that it was a tribute to an abstract principle of justice, or that it was made needful by some physical law profounder than all known laws, and to which moral changes are themselves subordinated, such as the misused text "Without shedding of blood is no remission,"

or that it was simply adding a climax of meaning to the educational economy which had prevailed hitherto in the divine dealings with the selected people,—on what other ground can it be held to have been a necessary condition for the redemptive work?

If, as theologians generally have admitted, the virtue of Christ's death did not arise from the mere physical change, as such, but in the spiritual strength, in the unswerving will and the full responsive love, all these constituting his moral triumph, why was not the actual death spared him when this condition of the soul-consciousness was reached? Since human perfection was attained, and the divine satisfaction had thereby, why did he not blossom into complete being? Why did he not come down from the cross, and show himself as glorified? The imperfection of the type of Abraham and Isaac is here manifest. The resemblance is carried to a certain extent, but then it ceases. Abraham was spared the real sacrifice to which he had consented, even though it violated his moral instincts, and thus became a trial of faith. But Jesus is not spared, and the intent of God the Father,

which he had made his own, goes on to its fulfillment. No occurrence on a lower plane could fully typify what was to occur on this higher one. The triumph of Jesus had no perfect and true image in any possible physical act of man, nor could any human moral or religious intent fully prefigure what was passing in his consciousness. Be that as it may, he is not spared, and we ask why?

First, let us notice that the persistent purpose to do and submit to the will of the Father could not have been perfect had he not known his death to be inevitable. In his sayings he had previously alleged it to be so, but the tempting understanding and the physical instincts had suggested otherwise. Hence the prayer "Father, let this cup pass from me." But this temptation is overcome. Death is not declined. The consciousness of the seeming withdrawal of the sustaining influence shows itself in the utterance "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This, and the after one, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," show that his death was taken for granted and submitted to. He knows now the Father's will, and his own divine will in

the form of his human will; and thus God and man meet in the profoundest depths of our spiritual being.

Moreover, we may allege economical reasons why his death should have been actual. His intended followers would have missed the most powerful motive-spring had they not seen that his spiritual strength was sufficient to carry him through the article of death. Had he indeed come down from the cross and showed himself then and there as glorified and omnipotent, it would have been a display of divine power rather than a proof of his love; and the task of faith would have been less. And there is the further reason (which I will not stop to explicate), that the recognition of glorified humanity may be possible only for those who themselves have been the subjects of incipient glorification. Thus to the other bystanders this would have been a disappearance, and nothing more.

But it is one thing to hold his death to have been required for these economical reasons, and another to hold it to have been absolutely necessary for his own spiritual triumph, and to bring about the new relation to humankind.

Death is a part of human experience, about which we know something when we look at it from outside, but which we cannot look at from within. We cannot penetrate the consciousness of a human soul when the bonds which connect it with our known world undergo attenuation beyond a certain length. We cannot follow them to their severance. If there be a sub-consciousness in the human being all the while, and the brain-consciousness is made up of this and the determinations of the outer world, we cannot trace the subsidence of the latter into the former and describe it in words. Reproductive imagination is impotent here, but something remains for pure thought. To undergo death one must have passed through this phase; nor would Jesus have passed through the human career, and known our lot in all points, had he not also have passed through it. If the soul-consciousness remains after death, it must know then for the first time what this mid-region contains—what death really is.

Here now, for still further explication, we need to recall the doctrine, manifestly true, of the organic unity of the human race. From this it follows that the intent of the divine

dispensation in Christ is not to perfect and beatify individual human souls as such, but only as members of an organism. The intent is, either to regenerate the human race or else to create from it a new organism, which shall have ideal perfection and completeness. On grounds needless, perhaps, to adduce here, we hold God's intent for man to have been thus universal; that Christ died for all men; that the new organism will consist of all such as do not willfully withhold themselves from it. Thus it follows that the motive power of God's self-limitation, taking the form of sacrificial love, must be brought to bear upon all men; and that otherwise the possibility of their perfection is not supplied. If this be true, then the knowledge of God's love in Christ must reach those who have passed through death into whatever possible environment. This is not holding to any such notion as "probation after death," as might easily be shown. As Jesus' knowledge was human, and attained through human *media*, his knowledge, before his own death, of the state of existence of human souls after death must have been such as was gained through human *media*. However modified by

the divine element in the hypostatic union, and whatever prophetic vision may have been possible and actual for him, it was human knowledge still. He must know thus, yet otherwise than thus, and in the full sense of knowledge, human existence in this form. Hence the significance, and the need for a soul under time-conditions, of the interval between his death and his resurrection. He does not know death, we may say, in the fullness of its definition until the present mode of being and that other mode of being stand in mental contrast. Thus his own physical glorification, or instatement in the ideal and permanent relation to his own glory, is postponed until he is brought into conscious connection with the departed ones, whom, too, he came to save. Thus, his death, and the subsequent consciousness and activity, do not appear as part of an arbitrary economy, but as necessary, as part of the process required for the ontological change which his redemptive work is to bring about.*

Certainly, in the Christian Scriptures, the response of faith, in which human recovery

*As something more than the meagre treatment of this interesting topic, alone possible in the dimensions of this lecture, I must be permitted to refer to its ampler treatment in the concluding chapters of the first volume of my work "Christian Doctrine Harmonized."

is begun, is alleged to be elicited by the knowledge of Christ crucified, of the divine condescending love transmuting itself into the human responsive love. And this is, too, the description of Christian experience. One would think, then, that the appreciation of this ought to be of something simple, and easy to be brought home to the simplest human capacity. And further meditation upon this ought to intensify one's conviction of this love, and not necessarily carry one into doubts and questionings, which are sure to arise if human ingenuity here insists upon a *residuum*, and obtrudes theories which sorely trouble the intellect. If abstract questions are here raised and solutions given which become weights to withhold the soul from yielding to this, God's revelation of himself, their untruth or insufficiency may be suspected. Such seems to have been the result of many theories of atonement which have made it to conceal some new and unique mystery. The attractiveness of Christianity has been diminished, and many have been repelled thereby. If the alleged mystery weakens the attractive power of Christ's atonement, it may be thought on that account to be spurious. Whatever mystery there be must

be such as will enhance, and not impair, our conception of the divine love. The real mystery is for theologic reflection and not for popular instruction to deal with. It lies in the inability of the human mind to bring within the sphere of understanding and imagination the divine self-limitation required for the incarnation itself. This appears when we endeavor to state it in terms, and it appears again, in the seeming oblivion of the divine consciousness indicated by Jesus' lament upon the cross. These two are the *magna opera* indeed, and different aspects of the one mystery, but beyond this there need be none. And when brought up for reflection this mystery does not weaken but enhances our conception of the divine love, since it appears as lowering itself for our sakes to the greatest possible depth.

That in the history of theologies new mysteries should have been superadded to this, which have no moral nor religious power, but suggest doubts, or keep the Christian mind in perpetual agitation, we are only reconciled to by regarding it as part of the dialectic process through which theology has made its advance.

LECTURE III.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE FUTURE, AS DETERMINING THE MODE OF HUMAN MORAL ACTIVITY.

What is in the future? What is the possible and probable condition or set of relations before us, immediate or remote?

This is a question of surpassing interest for the human soul. What will be the existing state of things, according to our power of prevision, on this our planet, as well as what will be the issue in the realm of departed souls, is a question whose answer determines the aim and the mode of all moral activity. We plan our life and direct our energies accordingly. Moral systems differ chiefly according to the extent of this prevision, and are either egoistic, and make the welfare and amount of happiness for the individual the guiding indication of present conduct; or they are altruistic, *i. e.* some aim is set regarding the welfare and happiness of the human race,—an aim which may be comparatively clear in its outlook upon the immediate future, but which

is obscured in its imagination of that which is remote; or they are religious, both when obedience to prescriptions is the rule, and the effort to penetrate the result is abandoned, and also when it is taken into the thought that conscious existence after death is possible, or probable, or certain, and when thus the forecasted condition of the human race under another environment must have its influence in determining the plan of life and the mode of moral activity.

If the thread of human history, as it is continued on this planet, and the thread of human history as it is continued in the conscious existence of human souls after death, be not utterly distinct,—if they have connection, and are part of a unified system,—if there are not two streams of divine government, entirely separate,—then these, which seem apparently two, but which are ideally and in the divine mind one, must be interrelated; and if any knowledge of this interrelation can be had, it must affect accordingly human moral activity. And thus it becomes manifest that a faulty abstraction may be made on either side, and that life may be planned

with sole regard to the probability of the happenings in this visible sphere, disregarding the parallel and possibly converging current of history for the departed and departing generations: or else the latter only may be held in view, and one become comparatively careless and indifferent to any result of the actual human history, and the welfare of the generations that are to succeed the existing one; the importance of this, in the subjective regard, being swallowed up in the apparently superior importance of the ultimate and permanent condition of mankind. That these two are severed in thought, and thus that the guide to moral activity is partial or vacillating, can only come from a superficial regard, from a lack of ability or inclination to unify these two, or from the failure of any attempt so to do. Hence, we have accusations from either side. Christians have been faulted for too exclusive attention to the probable existence after death, and for disregarding the present needs and claims of the human race, and thus their morality has become the subject of criticism. And the other side has been faulted for blinding itself to the claims upon thought of the future state of

existence, for planning the human career, and directing its energies as if this earthly experience were the only one.

There is historic explanation of the fact that in the beginning of Christianity, when new hopes were started for mankind, when an unwonted enthusiasm was aroused, when the knowledge or belief of the resurrection of its founder had entered the mind, when, too, it was the prevailing impression that the final consummation was nigh at hand, its adherents should have become indifferent to this present human existence. In their astonishment that any should withhold themselves from these comforting and inspiring thoughts and expectations, they were inclined to withdraw themselves apart from the world and to deepen the chasm of separation. Yet the history of Christianity shows that its adherents were constantly struggling against this, and gradually recognized, more or less extensively, that this present world had its claims upon them, that the intended reformation was larger than they had imagined, and was a more difficult task. The cardinal principle of Christian conduct, love, was too living to be long fettered by this

blinding tendency, and it was forever breaking through these superimposed bounds, and busying itself with the relief of human suffering, and with tentative efforts (as yet with undeveloped intelligence as to methods), to improve man's physical and social condition. Its missionary enterprises, alas! too often disregarded the immediate human welfare, but this was when a superstitious element had infected their activity, and outward and mechanical conformity was accepted instead of a spiritual allegiance. But, while never, perhaps, entirely free from this misapprehension of the intent of their Master, these enterprises were gradually purifying themselves, and have always been a kind of index of the strength and purity of the governing Christian motives. And in proportion to their purity were the claims of humankind, that its temporal welfare should not be disregarded, met and gratified with such intelligence as was had.

A careful study of the New Testament shows that in the mind of Jesus Christ these two aims were equally set forth, and illustrated in his own conduct. Thus their unity was implied, if not stated in terms. And hence

ideal Christianity is not chargeable with fault from either side; and actual Christianity sooner or later endeavors to recover itself, if it discover in itself a disproportionate leaning either way. It is ever busy in attempts to unify both.

But to return to our argument. It is evident that the rule of conduct to determine present activity, will undergo modification according to the clearness and truth of our prevision, and according as it extends but little way or far into the remote. The whole problem then, divides itself into two questions, or rather into three. First: what state of things, more or less satisfying the moral ideal, can be or may be reached on this planet, towards which it is our duty to urge our way? Second: what is the meaning, in our thought-system, of the state of being after death? And, third: how are these interrelated, and can they in combination furnish the true aim of our conduct and guide for our activity?

First, as to the earthly probabilities. It is certain that the mass of men, and ordinary minds must be content with, and are only

adequate now, for a very unextended outlook. We may think, indeed, that in the days to come a vision of the farther remote may become more general, but just now they linger still in the mists. They must be content with such rules for moral conduct as present themselves as the crystallized results of human inquiry and experience. Unless they willfully disregard all moral distinctions whatever, they must still be truthful and benevolent. They must be honest according to present prescriptions until some other rule of justice shall have legitimately replaced the present ones. And if they are more than animals they must be God-fearing and devout. They still need to have the obligation to all this brought home to them; for even in this *stratum* of humanity we witness constant outbreaks of the selfish principle, though, it may be, with more excuse than have the inroads of the selfish principle in the *strata* above them. For, for them it may be that the intelligence and the motives have not yet been supplied to keep them true to their own subjective or objectified ideals of conduct.

But the more cultured and thoughtful

stratum of humanity, which always, either directly or indirectly, leads the others, needs and inclines to look deeper than all this, and to ask what is the ideal state of humanity on our planet, and how far can it be made real. Not until all belonging to this grade reach the same reply to these questions can they be at one in their advice to those below them, and agreed as to the mode of their own activity.

This is a most profound problem, and tasks the human mind to the uttermost. It is the one which is now agitating the thoughtful world, and which has roused it from its mental repose to ask what remedy is possible for the wrongs and imperfections in the social state, and in human conditions in general. It is certainly a great gain that the wrong is seen and acknowledged. This is the first step towards its repair. And that some who see or feel this wrong are disposed to rush rashly, and others to tread cautiously, are the two forms now, of the progressive and conservative tendencies. Some are so captivated by the contemplation of a state of things which they can imagine, that they leap forward and

contend for its realization without seeing the impediments in the way. And others, again, seeing that human selfishness perennially exists, and that to it can be traced all the wrongs of the past, foresee, or think they do, that it will continue to produce new wrongs, or the same wrongs in new form, and so they become despairing and inert.

But this latter, the resort of the extreme conservative attitude or disposition, shows but a superficial regard. It ignores the fact that the condition of mankind has not been stationary; that it has a history; that while the human motive-springs still remain the same, they actualize themselves in different forms; that there has been a growth in moral knowledge; and that knowledge itself, by making the true ideal more evident and attractive to what is deepest in the human soul, reacts upon the motive-springs, and either intensifies the motive force of the good principle, or makes more diametrically contrary, willful and spiritual any opposition to it. The positive worth is in the progressive spirit. The worth of the conservative attitude is negative, and consists in weighting and

holding back the confused or thoughtless zeal of the former.

Christian people, in endeavoring to settle these questions for themselves, have been accustomed to consult their sacred writings, and some have professed to find in them doctrinal vindication for the endeavor to segregate the Christian community from the world, and hence draw the line of demarkation as sharply as possible. They have found indeed, that the immediate aim and effort of the divine interference, and the consequent human activity, has been to make an *election* from the mass of mankind who should be the bearers and propagators of the new regenerating principle, and constitute, thus, a "peculiar people." These were the "leaven" of the world which was to assimilate to itself whatever did not refuse to be assimilated. If any did refuse to be thus assimilated, they, the leavened portion, must still remain a "peculiar people." Hopeful and sanguine as St. Paul was of the results of the Christian principle, this distinction still remained in his mind, and to him the antagonism seemed likely to endure till the end of the dispensation.

This conclusion had its germ and stimulus in the words of Jesus Christ himself. He prayed, indeed, for his disciples, and for all who should believe in him through their word. But he by no means declared that the distinction was to be effaced. "They are not of the world," said he, "even as I am not of the world." The "world" was still implied in his thought. He prayed that all these, thus separate, might be one, as he and the Father were one; thus recognizing organic completeness in the new human race; and left untouched the question whether the completed organism, covering or including the two states of human existence, would be co-extensive with the human race, and be the old organism regenerated and reconstructed; or, whether the antagonism would permanently continue. It cannot be argued, from a *consensus* of his entire words, that he committed himself to either alternative. And hence dogmatism is out of place here, and we are thrown upon our speculative ability.

There is no doubt, however, that to an ordinary inspection the New Testament favors this latter view, especially as St. Paul, with

inspired intuition, or prophetic insight, seems to see the evolution passing beneath the shows of phenomena, and that the evil principle is spiritualizing itself as well as the good principle, assuming forms less gross and carnal, and becoming more purely willful and deliberately antagonistic, till it should culminate and manifest itself in some visible antichrist.

It is on this account that Christianity has been charged with admitting into its thought a persistent dualism, with regarding the irrational as unsolvable and unremovable, thus also with a violation of the æsthetic sense, which requires a removal of all contradiction. The question is whether, for human thought, there is any way of escaping this dualism.

To avoid this, human ingenuity has been tasked to the uttermost, and various methods have been resorted to. The New Testament Scriptures have been studied, and isolated texts discovered which seemed to promise a universal restoration, or some earthly millenium. But they do not seem to the unprejudiced mind sufficient to bear the burden, and were manifestly foreign to the habitual

mode of thinking of the authors of these Scriptures. Besides, the speculative validity of this solution depends upon the validity of a prior solution. For it is no more irrational that the irrational should permanently endure than that it should ever have existed. Hence such as these need to show that the dualism is but seeming, and that evil is not irrational, (of which presently).

Again we have the notion, not Scriptural but speculative, of conditional immortality, about which we need only say that it assaults the absolute character of moral distinctions, and requires an ethic of expediency only, hence that it affords a spurious sense of obligation, and substitutes a selfish for a loving motive-spring.

Again, there are the various philosophic schemes which virtually deny the moral distinction altogether, by making man and his determinations a moment or link in the inexorable physical *nexus*.

And for some, who have not been satisfied with these superficial resorts, there has been required an endeavor speculatively to discover a possible mode of human universal recovery,

and thus to vindicate their emphasis upon the above-mentioned isolated texts of Scripture;—an onerous task indeed, admitting the absolute character of moral distinctions, and one doomed to failure, and found at length to subside upon the unintelligent feeling or emotion of hope that God will in some way, undiscoverable, annul the contradiction, and restore the human heart to its complacency.

It would require too long a critique here, to deal with certain philosophic modes of treating this question. We may say, however, that to make moral evil a necessary moment of the process, and a needful dialectic in the evolution of the idea, again assaults the absolute character of moral distinctions, and cannot explain the form they take in human consciousness.

None of these endeavors carry us out of the mists created by this apparent dualism, into the clear light beyond, of mental satisfaction. The conclusion may be that the solution of this problem eludes our mental insight, and by creating the alternatives for faith, thus elicits our moral strength, which is certainly needful for permanent human recovery.

A solution of the inquiry into the possible and probable condition of the human race has been sought after in another way. Recognition is made of the fact that human knowledge is progressive, and that consequently the improvement and harmonization of its instincts, or crystallized prudential habits, must be also progressive. The principle of heredity is availed of and followed out to the utmost of conjectured results.* And this is an imagination of a generation in the far future, with rectified instincts, in which the altruistic and egoistic tendencies shall have coalesced;—a fascinating ideal, indeed, which has an imperishable element of truth, with which the Christian ideal has points of agreement; but which, in my regard, is not philosophically nor even scientifically profound.

For, it is acknowledged that the egoistic

*We may note in this connection the effect upon this theory of Mr. Herbert Spencer of the alleged discovery of Weisman, in his work on Heredity, that acquired habits are not inherited, that the modifications of human proclivity thus reached are only transitory, and are not included in the physical *nexus*. I have my doubts whether this is not a hasty conclusion, and await scientific testimony from a larger induction. A simple divergence from the customary mode of action, may indeed, in the next generation, be weakened and effaced. But if repeated in the generations which immediately follow, may modify the involuntary proclivity. This whole allegation separates into two streams the voluntary and involuntary modes of human activity and tendency, and does not fully admit their interaction, and their modification of each other.

proclivities have had their origin in the needs derived from the environment, and been modified by the requirements made by the surrounding nature, and, unless this too changes, these also must continue, and will perpetually bring assault upon the altruistic tendency. It is required, to justify the imaginative picture which this theory presents, that the obligation of sacrifice, or, (more correctly according to the requirements of the theory), the expediency of sacrifice, shall become so paramount and universal a conviction as to annul, at the birth, any egoistic proclivity asserting itself. If such sacrifice shall continue to be difficult and painful, it will still remain as a contradiction nurturing again the egoistic proclivities. If it can be transmuted into pleasure, and thus be extinguished as sacrifice, this too must be transitory, since it will be assaulted by the despairing admission of its own transitoriness, since it gives a picture having no absolute worth, gratifying only momentarily the imagination, and above all haunted by the knowledge that it has been purchased at the fearful expense of the failures and the agonies of the past generations, of this holocaust of human

victims; a feeling sharp enough to wound its complacency, to start a pessimistic fear that the cycle may again revolve; and vivid enough to generate a new set of instincts more subtly contradictory.

The only relief that can come to human thought, when it occupies itself with these imaginative pictures of a possible state of things here on earth, is derived from the admission that the generations departed have, too, a history, and that carried on in a more than parallel, in a converging current, which will at length unite with the actual and visible human history, and thus display the unity and the meaning of the whole,—to which conclusion the Christian Scriptures supply their *Imprimatur*. If there be grounds, metaphysical, moral, as well as revealed, for holding human immortality and responsibility, then these two questions cannot be separated; or if studied apart, it must be to see how they converge into one.

Evidently humankind must go forward, and plan for itself, and devise measures for its own improvement, immediately or remotely, amid this darkness and uncertainty as to the

ultimate results. No clear pathway for human thought is discernible by which it can prove for itself the removal of the contradiction of moral evil. But its refusal to abide content with the permanency of the irrational is perennial. And thus it vibrates. This is the intensest trial of its faith,—seduced, on the one hand to rest in prèmature solutions, and drawn by a profound mental requirement, on the other, to rest in its idea of God as still supremely loving. Therefore perfect mental satisfaction cannot be had here. At any former period of the human story, at this period, at any conjectured future period, we do not see that this insight would have been or would be a boon; for if it were granted, this trial of our spiritual fibre,—this despairing and hoping, this believing and doubting experience, would hardly have sufficient burden cast upon it to call out the utmost human moral strength, and thus elevate man to his true dignity. On the one hand we refuse to think the dualism to be necessary. On the other, we cannot deny that it exists and is more than *schein*. In this perplexity and uncertainty mankind must go on, and prepare itself for its coming experience on

this planet, and for its future existence under another set of relations.

These two currents of human progress do not seem now to intermingle. On the one side we have Christian prayers for the departed as in organic unity with ourselves. As to the other, we have only conjecture, but we cannot think away sympathy and love, and that longing which is prayer. There appears no bridge upon which we can travel across from our side, and return to report; or if any have gone over and returned, they have not been allowed to report, or have been unable to report from the inadequacy of language, or have refrained from reporting from the conviction that it would be no boon to those still surviving. That there is any frequent passage from the other side to ours, is a conclusion without evidence worthy of respect. Each portion of the human race moves on in its own light, and the ultimate coalescence of these two streams of human history must be as much a craving for one as for the other. They, the departed ones, as well as we, must still mentally cry, "How long, how long?" and show thus that they are our brethren still.

In our day the conviction is becoming more and more strong and steady that we must make more of this present world; that it is full of wrongs that may be righted; that it is possible so to modify or reconstruct the social state as that comfort shall be more generally diffused, human intelligence be clarified and enriched, the conditions and opportunities for development and elevation be made more universal; and, as a consequence, that the loving spirit which ties together this human brotherhood may revive or strengthen, assert its ideal vigor, without artificial impediments and superinduced restraints.

Many are trying to devise means by which all this can be measurably accomplished. The difficulty, confusion and uncertainty arise from our inability to gather all the facts required for a trustworthy induction, and to penetrate very far into the future. The threads which make the web of human history are too numerous, for any one to weave this changing web into the unchanging warp. Any anticipation must be scrutinized carefully. Hence the lesson to move cautiously,—not to uproot but to replace by

development,—not to make efforts too abstract, and regarding only the immediate in space and time. The result that should never be lost sight of in all such efforts must be universal and inclusive, and respect the entire human race. The immediate result must, indeed, be partial, and at first exclusive, and respect the more advanced peoples; but this still with the view of the after result upon the outlying sections of the human brotherhood. Meanwhile, the two efforts may go on, in some way, *pari passu*; the one so to improve the uncultured races on the earth as to prepare them for their after elevation; the other to rectify, as we can, the social state of the more intelligent peoples.

And along with all these efforts, let men not forget that, beneath all this, the divine energy is at work, and will surely accomplish its purpose. That while it will not crush human freedom, but will forever leave to man to determine the moral form of his activity, it still holds absolute control of the material content of human action, that this is caught up into the current of an irresistible wave that sweeps securely to its shore. This may be

man's consolation for his own possible mistakes, and keep alive his faith and cheerfulness amid his own failures. That we are on the threshold of a revolution, either to be quiet or violent, that we are on the eve of great social changes, becomes yearly more and more probable. Insensibly almost, for the general knowledge, we have been led to it; and thus we recognize the divine mind, in human history, as well as in the physical evolution.

A *millennium* is not to be hoped for. Sufficient Scriptural warrant for it is wanting, and there is no speculative warrant. The true interpretation of our mundane story, so far as we can comprehend it, is, that in it and by it moral good and evil are both being spiritualized. It is all important to see that this is true of the latter as well as the former. When moral evil shall have become pure—if we can think it, at length, to have become willful, and be known as a conscious and deliberate antagonism,—in the possibility that when on the eve of this last result for human thought, man may hesitate, and decline it in this pure form, as a possible

mode of being,—in this alone is any speculative ground for the removal in thought of the contradiction. But this ground is still not secure, since we fail to see how pure evil has any power to make itself other than it is; and since we see that, even in the immediate antecedent stage, the motive power of good, having undergone constant abatement, seems on the verge of extinguishment. External violence is either annihilation, or the annulment of human moral freedom; and means the recalling by God of his own creative acts.

But, on the other hand, that moral good is spiritualizing itself is more and more manifest. We are learning yearly, and with increasing rapidity, by what kind of activity human love, responding to the divine love should manifest itself. The spirit of evil has been found to be lurking in many an institution, or part of the social fabric, long established, and primarily sprung from human selfishness. The sympathy of the morally good becomes, all the while, finer and more exquisite, and respects not only the physical needs of men and their requirements for enjoyment, but the subtler psychic disorders

and diseased imaginations,—these needless tortures which the human soul has been inflicting upon itself and upon others. It strives to reach and remedy even these and is discovering methods by which to do it. To diffuse this disposition and ability to minister to the more recondite wants of man is part of the duty of those who already, in degree, possess it. Mankind will never become a true brotherhood until it reaches the ability as well as the disposition so to minister. Thus men may be united by subtler and stronger threads.

The great fault of our existing social state is that it allows or furnishes too many fetters and restrictions upon moral freedom—by which term, here, we mean the ability to choose for its own sake, and from its own pure attractiveness moral good or evil. This restriction exists even in the simplest social conditions, where the external fetters seem to have been reduced to a *minimum*. It has been apparent in all actual attempts to realize an Utopia. In all such the self-seeking principle has sooner or later displayed itself, and for its own ends forged

restrictions for others. Nay, it exists even in the family itself. The parent has been tempted to carry his control of his child too far; to seek to carry him his own way, as though *his* subjective view were the absolute truth; to prolong authority beyond the period when human manhood should be respected and, allowed free self-assertion, be allowed to act according to its own convictions. How parental control, absolutely needful at first, should be allowed to lapse by degrees into parental unrestraint is a most difficult concrete moral problem. But the former was carried by its own impetus too far in the primal human efforts for social organization, and we have had primogeniture, and the patriarchal and tribal systems, upon which were built national systems, which have only very slowly been emancipating themselves from the restrictions laid upon them by the former ones; and we see this process of emancipation going on in our own day.

Thus the progress, through which man has reached a larger personality, and successively come to regard himself as member of a larger and still larger organism, first as mem-

ber of a family, next as citizen of a state, and finally as member of a human brotherhood or a church, has had its own dialectic; and as human society has improved itself these restrictions have become more numerous, complicated and subtle. Possibly, too, they have become by this very separation and diffusion, attenuated, weaker, and more removable. These restrictions are both natural and artificial, or conventional. The natural ones are founded in the essential human nature itself. The artificial ones grow out of the complications of the social state. Since artificial, they are removable by the same voluntary ability which imposed them, and the remedy can be sought and found. The former ones are profounder and need a more radical remedy. Political, social, moral wisdom are needed for the first task, while religious motive-springs and motives, alone can effect the other. The one task is for all Christians as included in the state. The other is for them as members of the church. The two lines of activity must needs intermingle, and how to contrive or find the right relation of the two furnishes a constant question of conscience for every Christian man.

It would be a very easy matter to show at length how these fetters upon human moral freedom exist in the rude and rudest human societies. It is enough, here, to instance the defect in them of the requisite moral knowledge. Moral alternatives, indeed, exist in every conscious human soul, whether savage or civilized, *i. e.*, he selects one course of activity rather than another for other considerations than the immediate consequence of well-being or enjoyment to himself. Unless the innate ability so to decide existed as a *substratum*, further moral knowledge could not be built upon it, nor could altruistic maxims of conduct ever have come to be formulated. All moral knowledge is potential in the human soul as such. The sense of duty, however obscured or distorted, lies ineffaceably in the distinctively human structure, and only awaits development. The very possession of language shows the possibility of advance; and although the real advance may have been too slow for exterior observation to detect, nevertheless there must be movement, either in advance or retreat. Nothing in man's social history, or in his psychical his-

tory, any more than in his physical history, is stationary. And one result of this movement is the discovery, by slow increments, by what kind of activity the innate principle of moral development should realize itself. Not until human society has made many steps in advance does the current of this moral history become clearer, and patent for observation, but it was all implicit before. All *a posteriori* observation, patiently conducted, validates this *a priori* conclusion.

The races which have gone very far along in this moral pathway can understand themselves, and see what is still defective, and thus the speed of moral progress can be accelerated. As they are in the forefront of the onward movement, they do not need so much to understand how they have reached this position, as to understand it fully, and to ask what is to be done with their present light. They find in their own condition too much ignorance still, too many defects to make it seem a duty to thrust their political and social institutions upon the races which linger behind them in the onward march. They must mend and perfect their own condition, ere they can sincerely advise it for others.

The neglect of this accounts for the failure of so many missionary and civilizing efforts. Into our intercourse with the less cultured peoples we carry our vices in the fore-front, and let them conceal our virtues, and this causes these virtues to be suspected of insincerity. "We ask for more real and winning results of your Christianity," the heathen say, "before we are ready to adopt it; or, if we do adopt it, it is for political ends, rather than because the results are such as to prove the truth of the cardinal principle which is recommended to us."

The reformation, then, must begin at home. This is the burning need and longing which is now stirring all minds who long for such an Utopia as the religion of Christ suggests, or their own reason approves.

In our highly complicated human society the restrictions upon moral freedom have become not only more numerous, but more refined and subtle. The ignorant and poor have been biassed by the pressure of physical want, or by instinctive antagonism to the pressure of the social exclusiveness of the educated and the rich. And these, again, are

perpetually tempted to retain their privileges, and to sophisticate away the instinctive human craving for a more real brotherhood. How can one be morally free in the pure sense since the physical want is so imperious, and demands immediate gratification? How can one be morally free in the pure sense when possessed by long sufferance of a monopoly of earthly good things, and subtly tempted to retain them?

The reform needed is vast and two-sided. Can these two forms of human temptation be made to neutralize each other and settle into an *equilibrium?* What can be done to remove either bias and bring the pure alternatives before human moral choice? What can enable it to adopt the good, not for immediate self-interest, but because it is rational, and the alone form of an ideal state? And on the other hand what can be done, that it may not be *forced* into evil, but be free to identify itself with it for its own sake, for the attractiveness of spiritual independency? Whether in such an actual condition, evil will not have lost its attractiveness is another question, but the faith that it may is the motive-spring of all

human moral effort. We must rescue all who now ignorantly choose the evil, and bring them to our side, and this we can do only by making the good supremely attractive. If any shall yet refuse, we can at least draw such a line as that they can be distinguished on the one side, and not be, in our observation, intermingled with the crowds on the other.

The needed reformation cannot be accomplished by any one method. The web is too complicated for any one to unravel, and to eliminate what has confused the perfect picture. We can only, bit by bit, straighten its distortions, and bring all to self-consistency and harmony. But if simultaneous efforts are made by many, each individual or group having before it its own portion to be rectified, we can bring about the conditions for its ultimate, or, at least, comparative symmetrization. Hence we can but remove one social excrescence at a time. But cautious effort is indicated. What is needed is a reformation that will bring about a revolution insensibly and make every one content with it. Sudden revolutions and wars are violent remedies, some-

times needful, but bring their own *debris* of consequences to be removed ere the ground is clear for onward progress. Human intelligence, guided by love, not only will carry us in a smoother career, but in one swifter, than will any physical violence. The civilized nations are coming to see that war is a needless dialectic, and physical violence among the needy classes in the civilized societies is by many disavowed, or thought of only as a last despairing resort. It behooves the educated classes to see that they are not driven to this, and to seek to destroy the inclination rather than to crush the outbreak.

This is not the place nor time to discuss any immediate proposed measures. I have only sought to indicate what should be the aim, and what the moving-spring in all individual or concerted effort.

But, on the other hand, we must not forget that all this human effort after a more satisfying social state, which shall make men freer, and the whole less irrational, should not be made as an abstracted effort apart from the question whether it can have any, and if any, what effect upon the other stream of human

history as it flows on in the realm of the departed. These are members of the human race as well as we. The final cause of all moral effort must then be something more than the production of a social state here on earth which will satisfy the reason when realized in an existing generation, or series of generations, which are soon to pass away to the other side, —but, besides, to produce an organism of which they, as well as we, shall be constituent members :

"They, without us cannot be made perfect."

Is it then in our power to influence human history as it proceeds under the environment which is to ensue when these immortal beings close their eyes to the immediate phenomenal world? Were this last all in all, it seems not much matter in what state we are, or into what imagined immunity from present sorrows we can urge the coming generations. To know that we shall have gone over this torturing process for their problematical benefit alone is a pessimistic conclusion, assaulting our cheerfulness and deadening our energy. But once arouse the hope or impart the conviction that our present improvement and

their future improvement can react upon the foregone generations, and an optimistic feeling is aroused, and we can be cheerful under any sacrifices.

It is just here that Christian philosophy shows itself profounder than the philosophy which underlies many projected political and social movements. It draws its conclusion from a larger induction. It gives a more exhaustive definition of humanity, and thinks of all his possible relations to the universe as as well as of these present ones. It gives permanent and absolute value to human character, or rather to the human soul as possessing this character, instead of regarding him as a mere link in a physical or logical chain. It is thus individualistic, as well as socialistic. It regards the organism, not as an abstraction having completeness for the æsthetic demand only, but as made up of individual souls, each a microcosm in itself, reflecting, as it endures, more and more perfectly the macrocosm. It thinks the highest in man, not that he can feel and think and know, but that he can love and enjoy. He who can love purely and persistently is thereby congener to the Highest,

and a grander creation than all these systems of stars and nebulæ that fill the illimitable space ; and the present aim of Christianity is to remove all obscurations from the vision of this love, that its bliss may be secure. It recognizes not only that physical sympathy exists and binds together all human life, and all animal life as well ; not only that mental sympathy exists, and that the field of knowledge is common property, but that moral sympathy exists and should have its fetters removed, and a truer development be made possible, and thus a finer and more spiritual union come to be.

If, then, in the realm of the departed, human history still proceeds, it must be influenced by the streams which are continually pouring into it from the living generations. If a purer and stronger love, or an increasing increment of spiritual strength shall characterize these successive inflowings, the principle of good must be thereby strengthened, and the speed of the entire moral progress be accelerated.

If human life here on earth have any meaning other than physical for the in-

dividual, it is that it is the occasion, or the condition for moral choice or probation, sometimes consciously made, and sometimes made unconsciously and obscurely, and in depths which exterior intelligence cannot penetrate.

And if the existence after death have any significance, it must be in part that it furnishes the conditions for the development of the moral or loving principle, for the invigoration of the moral *status*, and the possibility of indefectibility for such as have on earth committed themselves to this alternative. That the knowledge of God, and of the divine self-limitation, whereby the human race has been morally reached, must be afforded to all who have passed beyond the veil follows as a corollary from the admission of the organic unity of mankind. Not otherwise can the utmost potentiality of the creature be elicited. That the ignorant, degraded and seemingly neglected ones shall be afforded this knowledge, follows; or else we divide mankind, or even the morally good, into two organisms, with an impassable wall of separation, and we have another dualism with its attendant difficulties.

But, while ultimate assimilation shall thus be reached by all having the quality of moral good, and thus it be literally true that none are saved but through the knowledge of Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, the obligation is none the less to accelerate the speed of the progress. Hence we are adding to the strength of good by seeing to it that the generations pass away from the earth as far advanced in good as possible. It will not do for love to slumber and be inactive. Thereby it is weakened as love. The divine love itself requires for its satisfaction that it be met by human responsive love, as the divine glory may be enriched by the glory of the creature. When Christian love relaxes in its zeal, it is in peril of extinguishment. Thereby the moral force as it may display itself in duties to the existing generations may undergo diminution, and thence will follow the very mental ignorance and physical evils we are seeking to modify. Thus Christian love may be indirectly remedial by removing our social imperfections, and directly remedial by diffusing itself, and strengthening the principle of good. By the latter effort it reaches the de-

parted generations, and thus hastens on the consummation.

How to apportion one's activity to bring about one result or the other is a question for the individual soul, as such. But it is also a question for concerted effort. Here the doctrine of the Christian Church comes in, as an institution enabling such concerted effort. It must needs respect both purposes. Very perplexing problems at once arise. How far shall it identify itself with any movement for social improvement originating beyond itself? Under what restrictions, with due regard to other divine institutions, shall it originate such efforts? And this again brings up the prior questions: how it shall define itself, and what is its function in the world? How far has it an unchangeable constitution? What are the possibilities, without sacrificing or maiming this constitution, of its adapting itself to existing circumstances? And as its ministry must always be in the forefront of its efforts, what are the duties and limitations of this ministry?

Any one of these questions might supply a topic for an essay or a treatise. In the follow-

ing lecture I shall touch them all, though but lightly. Nevertheless I shall give an outline of what ought to be the consecutive, or logical treatment, and might be an exhaustive treatment of the same,—the denomination of which will be "the functions of the Christian ministry."

LECTURE IV.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

Man regarded as simply an individual is but a poor being. He only rises in the scale of our regard and becomes richer by virtue of his relations to others, and through these he is capable of an endless amplification. In order to this physical, mental, social, moral and religious instincts, or involuntary proclivities are implanted in his structure. These are elicited by an activity upon him from or through his environment, or by more direct and mystical influence, but there is that in him which immediately responds, so that he voluntarily acquiesces in the quickening determination. It is a most interesting enquiry, or branch of science, which notes that there is a premonition of much of this in the *stratum* of existence immediately below him;—in the animal kingdom. Even here, the individual rises to a higher definition as member of a species, and sometimes of a commonwealth, and we have the

possibility of our own social, political and moral conditions pre-imaged.

In consequence of these instincts in humanity, the members of a human *family* cling together. That they do so under modifications, as other animals do not, to the end of life, is because man is also, as they are not, a religious animal, and therefore capable of a finer and more permanent tie. Unknowing why, the members of a family feel and act as though they were in some sense *one;* and the conflicting interests afterwards arising, may weaken, but do not destroy the tie. The opposing or centrifugal influences are superinduced, and change with the change of circumstances, while the centripetal drawing is incessant, and never entirely unfelt.

In the social fabric, or the political state, personality develops into still further implications. Here each individual has been limited in order to be enlarged. He has parted with something of his individuality, in order to receive in return something of more value to himself than that he has parted with. He has lost something of his liberty, and come to feel his dependence upon others,

but sees that others have also become dependent upon him, and that the sphere of his own activity has been widened rather than narrowed, since it reaches farther from himself. This more complicated inter-relation is symbolized by divers social, external and visible aggregations, and by the created governments. These are the symbols of the unity and common interests of the individuals of the same.

Men, possessed by similar ideas, or convictions, feel *this* to be also a bond, and a finer one. These convictions guide or rule their activity, and they invariably invent some symbol which shall indicate and keep fast this, their common possession. When any *one* becomes absorbed in a thought, new or old, he seeks sympathy to strengthen his own possession of it, to confirm it as a true possession, to aid him in the endeavor to extend it.

In proportion as the sympathy springs from a more and more valuable possession, does it more urgently seek to secure itself in this by extending it. Eminently this is true of the religious relation. This ever seeks to fasten securely together its adherents.

It combines often with the social and ethical relations, and makes them to minister to its uses and its aims. It seeks to gather into its own unity whatever is needful for its own sustentation. That the religious bond is token of a profounder tie, is shown by the fact, that it survives amid the passing away of political structures, and social integrations. It fixes its own thoughts by symbols, and the permanence of those symbols in the history of all religions is another proof that this tie has reached to a profounder depth in human nature than any other. When conflict has come this has, in the main, been found to be the victor.

If the cardinal principle of this religion is *love*, it has the utmost increment of vitality, and is, from its very definition, immortal. Superadded to, and possibly coalescing with other bonds, it becomes, concretely, the strongest possible tie to bind men together. And if its sympathetic aim respects the whole human race, through it is the largest development and ultimate definition of personality reached. For while all these other instincts respect the transient, this alone respects the

permanent human relation. Families may fall to pieces, states may crumble and disappear, the subjective apprehension of truth may deal with changing object-matter,—but the bond of loving souls is indestructible.

As possessors of new thoughts, as having new aims for activity and new emotions, all unified by this immortal bond of love, the followers of Jesus Christ were tied together by the deepest and strongest possible sympathy. They saw that it need not conflict with other ties, but if it ever should, these must give way. Here was an economical motive, added to the instinctive prompting, why they should consociate together, and create some symbol of this, their unique common possession; and this intended not only to mark themselves to each other, and to the alien ones, as a distinct people, to keep them true to each other, and arrest any propensity to wander away, or grow weak in their allegiance, but to strengthen the sympathetic bond itself. Of their own impulse they would have done this.

Foreseeing this, and laying hold of these indestructible propensities of human nature,

their Master and Teacher gave them what they needed, what they must have, and what they would have created for themselves, *a church*. They were already an *ecclesia*, having subjective fitness, though arising from external selection, but at first, no objective bond or symbol of their allegiance existed. They could not be left to be bound together by the conscious and subjective tie only. They were not yet ripe for that. They still were not morally and religiously strong enough to be left to their own spontaneity. They needed to be guarded from external assault and internal temptation. Their imperfect wisdom needed to be supplemented by a deeper, and more far-seeing wisdom. They could not reach the intended perfection by a leap, but must go through a period of trial to bring out and increase their strength. And so he gave them beforehand what they would have invented for themselves, external marks and symbols; and, as coming from him, these should not be changeable by any after caprice. And these marks were so carefully chosen as to be profoundly symbolic. In the full significance of the rites of Baptism and the Holy

Supper we have all that is distinctive in the new revelation from God, all the profound truth now made known, appropriated and felt, imaged, and discoverable. Thus they have obligation not only as tokens of Christian profession, but as having teaching power, as preservatives of the truths they veil. Even for these reasons alone they must be unchangeable. And if, beside, there can be vindicated the doctrine that they were made channels of divine grace, *media* for influences mystical and beneath knowledge, this is still another reason to secure their permanency. If this new consociation is to exist as one, there arises thus the utmost need and the highest possible inducement to preserve these marks, symbols, or sacraments in their integrity.

And besides, if this new society, this *ecclesia*, is to exist not only to strengthen the inner bond which ties its members together, but if by virtue of this very tie they must long for further sympathy, and gather new adherents and friends from the outlying world, there emerges another reason why they should be bound by these visible and

unchangeable marks. Thereby only can they seek unitedly, as well as individually, to extend their compass; and organized efforts can become possible, of more power to work changes in the exterior world than any number of smaller, less carefully meditated, or individually impulsive efforts.

But,—on the other hand,—while these marks, symbols, or sacraments of the new society are needful for those yet on the pathway towards, and not yet at the summit of the intended perfection, it is in accordance with the cardinal principle of the new religion itself that they should be as few as possible, and not from their number constitute a bondage. Other rites and observations might thereafter be superimposed, arising from new requirements, but these must be transitory in their nature, and changeable or removable by those who may have as much wisdom as those who imposed them. The very idea or conception of love, as in its perfection pure spontaneity, requires that it should gradually relax and remove its own fetters. The weaker love, the more need of *law* and external guidance. The stronger the

love, the less need of law; and for perfect love there is no law, for it is at one with the divine love. Hence the profound wisdom of Jesus Christ in creating only these two marks of discipleship, and making them obligatory. These must remain as means for identification, because, till the end, as far as we can see, there is to be antagonism, and conflict with hostile influences.

In admitting, more or less intelligently, all this, Christian people have been almost universally agreed, and nearly every self-formed association of professed followers of Jesus Christ has retained the rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Anything else, in external observance, they have concluded, may be changed or abandoned, but these may not be.

In the earliest Christian days, when all were rejoicing in their new possession, the impulse was universal and irrepressible to impart to others the knowledge of their own riches. Hence all Christians were preachers of the gospel. And it would seem, from the historic evidence in our possession, that they also, of their own individual impulse, or under

guidance, administered, when their preaching was successful, the initiatory Christian rite. In this consists what is called the universal Christian priesthood, from which any further priesthood arises by limitation. They were mediators between God and the world, and their very love made this mediation watchful, active and incessant. But it soon became apparent, and it arises also from the nature of the case, that the disposition and permission to preach and teach and administer Baptism might be unwisely used. And thus, on *a priori* grounds, there appears the need, for the purity of the society, of a limitation to this permission; and so it came to pass, obviously or insensibly, that these high privileges came to be exercised by those thought best fitted to use them wisely. The teaching of the more competent came to be regarded as more trustworthy and authoritative, and their superior discretion in bestowing the rite of initiation to be admitted. But the inherent right, however limited for economical reasons, still remained. All this might be amply illustrated from Christian history.

There is no historical evidence that the

administration of the other Christian rite or sacrament was ever general or thrown open. Here a more marked limitation seems to be required from the necessity of the situation. The discretion needed to distinguish those who were fitted to share in this observance was not the common Christian possession. The benefit of this sacrament, and, indeed, its ideal and perfect administration itself, requires that those uniting in it should be free from unrepented sin, and should be one in the possession of the sacrificial mind, and thus be competent, in the only profound and true sense, to "shew forth the Lord's death." If this should be wanting in all those joining in the observance, it would become a mere mechanical performance. Therefore its administration must be entrusted to the wisdom of those competent to judge of the fitness of those who propose to unite in it, and these are supposed to have been trained for this very purpose. Thus the profound significance of the rite itself required that it should not be thrown open to the general impulse. The requirements of *law* as limiting spontaneity are here most apparent. Thus we have a

speculative vindication of the universal Christian practice of allowing the administration of this rite only to a limited and specially fitted priesthood.

Historically we learn that the universal Christian priesthood *was* thus limited. On these *a priori* grounds, for some minds quite as convincing as the others, we learn *why* it should have been so limited. The question now arises how and when it became thus limited. Can we trace back this limitation to any authority not to be declined? Can we connect it immediately or mediately to any prescription of the Founder of the religion himself? Was its evolution, though acknowledged to be gradual, presided over by acknowledged authority? Did Jesus Christ, in short, add a third requirement to the economic dispensation, and create a *ministry*, and did his inspired apostles guide its development? That his eleven disciples, and Paul, claimed to possess authority, and a commission delegated by Jesus Christ, seems apparent enough from the New Testament narratives, and other writings. Concretely, then, it would seem that a ministry did exist before

the Christian sacraments. For these only came to be, actually, on and after the day of Pentecost. This body of men were held to be the bearers of the trust in a higher sense than were the common disciples. The very deference paid them is evidence of this. If facts are as good evidence as prescriptions, and interpret the latter, it does seem that they were left in possession of plenary powers, and that the authority possessed by their Master was delegated to them, and that for the wise exercise of it they were promised the mystical guidance of the Holy Spirit. And if this mystical influence respected a particular Divine purpose, if there be valid ground for holding to the inspiration of any selected ones in a higher sense, and for more special aims, than the universal inspiration of the Holy Spirit, then this alone would give them such authority and demand the corresponding respect. If we admit more than ordinary insight in their written words, we cannot confine their inspiration to these, but must think it to pervade their entire mental consciousness, to guide them in their ordinary speech and in their prescriptions. No separation, in the

nature of the case seems possible. Whether these prescriptions were for the immediate situation only, or were permanent in their intent and hence in their obligation, and, if the latter, how far flexible, is a question that may be profoundly argued, as to which Christian men seem now in hopeless disagreement, but which will one day be satisfactorily answered.

That what the apostles *did*, as well as what they said, arose from the needs of the existing situation is indubitable. They gave commissions, and created offices according as the need was apparent. There is no evidence that they trusted to a prior prescription of Jesus Christ. Rather, they followed the monitions of their own consciousness, divinely illumined. Some of these offices were transient and passed away insensibly, and, as far as we can learn, without remonstrance. But others either met with no shocks, or withstood all shocks and became permanent. When the former ones had passed away, and the current of history becomes clear, we find still surviving some, the origin of whose prescription is related in the New Testament. The ministry

separated itself naturally into a threefold function. One set of activities after another was parted with by the governing powers. First, they disengaged from themselves the care required for physical relief, and created an order of deacons. Next, they abandoned the work of education and edification, growing all the while more urgent in its needs, to a more carefully selected body of men, reserving to themselves still the oversight; and ultimately there came to exist, somehow, sharers in the task of oversight, who became in this respect, their successors. Thus naturally grew up the Christian ministry. This threefoldness of function perennially exists, whether exercised by men alike in name and office, or anyhow distinguished. What might be confined to one *was* separated into three, and what is exercised by three may conversely be absorbed into one. Even when a threefold order is continued, the functions necessarily run into each other. Hence, from the first, the deacons authoritatively preached and baptized, and when thought to have sufficient wisdom were elevated to another function, and entrusted with the right to administer the Holy

Supper. This function, as we have seen, required great wisdom, and a training in this produced a fitness for the required oversight, the need of which perennially exists, and is always exercised by some. That with the changing conditions of mankind new adaptations may be required, and thus that the ministry must have a kind of flexibility, is indubitable, and can be historically illustrated. The separate functions may become less strongly marked and be barely distinguishable. Hence, comparing our present with the primitive ministry, we find much modification, and that, practically, the intermediate order has absorbed into itself much that was at first distinctive of the Diaconate and of the Episcopate.

On these grounds it may be held that a ministry is a mark of the Christian church as well as the two rites of Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Moreover as these two rites were symbolic, so the apostles themselves devised a symbol, but one less profound in significance, of the separation for the uses of this ministry; and we have the rite of laying on of hands in

ordination. And if the Christian brotherhood is to be kept bound together there seems no reason why it should ever decline this any more than it may the observance of the two sacraments, although the authority for it is one step farther removed from the source. Otherwise, the bond of union is weakened, external unity impaired, and there become divergent threads of history that have to be caught up and bound together again.

In all this, is the argument for the need, the existence, and the mode of perpetuation of the Christian ministry. I have sought thus to state it on grounds, for the most part speculative, or *a priori*, leaving to other hands the ampler historical illustration of the same. The argument is founded upon the needs of the economy, and endeavors to show it as a system of means entirely natural, truly rational, and ideally fitted to accomplish a still ulterior result, namely, the perfection of the Christian character as the condition for the process of regeneration; even though we admit that that ulterior result may be reached through a system less complete. God overrules men's mistakes, and accomplishes his loving purposes,

even though men misuse their freedom in not following his true prescriptions, or are ignorant of them.

And now, without further treatment of these debated topics, let us ask what are the functions of the Christian ministry such as we have it. And I do not mean by this how we shall distinguish the differing functions of bishops, priests and deacons; but how, since they all have one end in view, into what different sorts of activities their common work is divisible.

And first, they are in our own day, the administrators of the Christian sacraments, and usually the conductors in Christian worship. The propensity exists in human nature itself not to enter into the full religious significance of these mediatorial observances, and sometimes it may be lost sight of almost entirely, and the administration or conduct become a mere set of mechanical acts. We need not think that they are invalid, in consequence, or destitute of effect upon others; but if the performance has lost its inner soul, their beneficial effect upon others is greatly diminished. The people readily detect the

difference between a lifeless and heartless utterance, and one in which the thought and feeling of the utterer affect even the tone of his voice, and produce an influence upon others mystical and not easy to measure. And the effect upon a Christian minister of a superstitious view of his own functions, by which he regards himself as a magical medium between God and man (a notion often the result of a shallow theory), is to harden the utterance of such an one and make it less sympathetic. He hurries over his work in a perfunctory way, may not rule his own thoughts meanwhile, and displays no emotion, or may not feel it. That in some a view so low as this of the function of the Christian minister sometimes exists as a justification of his methods, is probably true. The propensity towards it always exists in our poor human nature, which is never entirely rid of superstition, from which the extremest culture has never entirely emancipated a single soul. This, which we cultured ones fight against, in other monitions of the same, requires especially to be struggled with in the uses of the ministry, and can,

perhaps, be most successfully supplanted by displaying its higher ends and finer purposes, which are ethical or religious.

An influence, somewhat counteracting to this propensity, is supplied by the needs of Christian preaching. Here the requirement is obvious that the minister should come into more immediate mental relation with his auditors, and avail himself of whatever resources he possesses. But here, too, the needful thought processes, and whatever feeling may have accompanied them, may have been entirely expended in the composition of the written sermon, and its delivery after all, become a mere perfunctory performance, a task to be got over, and excluded from the mind. The vehicle of utterance may be disregarded or undervalued, and the mystical influence and effect of speech and sound be entirely missed. In preaching, surely emotion is to be called forth, as well as the thought imparted. The purpose of it is such knowledge as will determine activity, and as will make the motive-spring of such activity warm and strong. The power of sweet sound, when guided by imagination, to sink into the very

depths of the human soul, is seen in the charm of music, and well-modulated speech may have a similar charm. The mental proposition is veiled in the sensuous utterance, and this last may penetrate more deeply into the roots of being than the other. A tone, sweet and tender, informed by soul emotion, kindles often into a fire the slumbering thought even of the auditor; and calls forth its own sympathetic response.

According to his ability it is incumbent upon every Christian preacher to make use of this power. And for this end physical culture is not to be despised, though it is still required that this should be at the service of Christian love.

And the *thought* which he is thus effectively to utter ought to be *his own.* To be able to enshrine the thought of another in this sensuous vehicle and make the latter exquisitely symbolic, is a rare natural gift, and the result of genius or inspiration; though the ability in lesser degree may be acquired by art and training. A more than ordinary vividness of *imagination* is required

to enable one to infuse his own soul into the words of another. The variant ability to do this marks the different degrees of excellence and effectiveness in the reading of Holy Scripture. It is a good test, *ceteris paribus*, of one's imaginative power.

But it is by no means a rare ability to utter one's *own* thought effectively. In proportion as its truth is recognized it may be felt, and the mode of utterance be affected accordingly. Almost every one can be eloquent when stirred by strong emotion, and the spontaneous modulation is likely to be true. Any thought then, to have this easy, unartificial, and effective utterance should be one's own possession, and not a borrowed one.

I have no doubt that one reason why we have much poor preaching is because many clergymen, in composing their sermons in their seclusion, avail themselves of others' thoughts rather than of their own. This propensity is measurably qualified in *extempore*, or rather, *impromptu* preaching, but even here one's own repertory may be so poor that he is obliged to reproduce what others

have said, in borrowed words or stereotyped phrases, without having fused them in the alembic of his own mind, and given them subjective form, and hence new life, making thus the human mind in its full definition the medium. This method of preparation may have become so habitual as to create a distrust in the value of the preacher's own thoughts; and in consequence his sermons are almost helplessly mechanical, and fail of becoming truly spiritual modes of relation.

This propensity may have been created, or fostered by the mode of the antecedent preparation, by the defects in the theological instruction. If this has consisted in the mere offering and acceptance of cut and dried propositions, coming from no matter what authority, which the recipient is expected to take for granted and reproduce as he can, with no effort to appropriate them in thought—to test, to see, to feel their meaning and their truth, it is not to be expected that every such one will readily break over these bounds, and tell to his after congregations, only what he knows and feels to

be true. In this way a faulty mode of instruction degrades the function of the Christian ministry. If our preachers would simply tell what they know, what thoughts have been suggested and feelings aroused by their own response to God's love in Christ, by their contemplation of humanity and its needs, their sermons would not fail to find adequate reponse.

It follows, likewise that this vivid Christian experience, this love of Christ, this love of man, and acquaintance with his ethical and religious defects and wants, must in different grades affect the efficiency of the minister in another one of his functions, viz : the *pastoral care.*

The helplessness of many clergymen in this respect is something mournful. They are ready, in various degrees of readiness, and from differing or mixed motives, to minister to the physical wants of their human brethren, the objects of their own pastoral charge in particular, but when called upon to minister to mental and religious needs, to deal with the disorders of the soul, they often draw back with an inward consciousness of inadequacy.

They hardly apply to themselves, as it might be shown they have a right to do, their Lord's promise, that it shall be given them what to speak. They forget that the Holy Spirit is theirs. But the Holy Spirit works through human active agencies, and not through men as passive machines. He still respects the native power, does not overcome it, though He may stimulate it to the utmost of its exercise. The personal equation, here, is susceptible of all manner of degrees; and for some the ability thus to minister must be confined to a narrow range. Our own church has felt this difficulty, and wisely allows the troubled soul to go beyond its own pastor for relief. Finely competent confessors are as rare as fine preachers. But as a proper culture may have aided in producing these, so a proper culture may aid in the production of those, and enable a greater ability than is usual in this line of pastoral duty. This is a department of preparation for ministerial work too much, hitherto, neglected. The Roman church has carried it to an extreme. An imitation of her method is not to be advised. A critique of it might be made to show that it is based upon a

wrong theory, and that its results are to be deprecated. We, in our church, must, for this end, start *ab initio*, and think out the method from our own starting point, and under the limitations of our own theology, which, as a unified system, is not identical with that of the Roman church. The difference between two possible methods may be slightly indicated from the very significance of the names given to this branch of theological culture. With the Roman church it is "Moral Theology," *i. e.*, theology so far as it is determined by the received ethic of that church, which can be shown to be practically, if not theoretically, a mere ethic of expediency, which has such flexibility that it effaces at times the absolute moral distinctions. With us the name is, or should be "Theological Ethics," *i. e.*, moral distinctions are taken to be absolute and immutable, recognized by human reason, and furnishing ground for the exhibition of the divine justice. And the inquiry is, how the maxims for human conduct thence deducible, are affected by the incoming of Christian doctrine, by the revelation of God and his purposes in Christ, in consequence of

which the whole life-plan must be changed. New maxims spring up, changes are made in the order and rank of those already received, and thus, in some degree, the details of duty are marked out, and reasons given for all this modification.

But for those of our clergy who are in any degree competent, this ministration to the soul wants of the troubled, perplexed, doubting or despairing ones is the very finest part of the ministerial office,—a true spiritual mediation. What wisdom and skill, what care and patience are needed to lead the struggling soul out of any "Slough of Despond," or to tear away the meshes of a false philosophy, and enable an escape, to let in the light of divine truth, by degrees, into the darkness of doubt! When one is successful in this, there becomes the greatest boon that one human being can give to another, and it arouses in the recipient the deepest feeling of gratitude, a sense of obligation that lasts through life. This realization of the pastoral tie is, perhaps, the deepest and most enduring personal relation ever existing here on the earth. The minister, to be successful in accomplishing it, must not

only be acutely sympathetic for ordinary mental distress, but so wise as to enable sympathy for subtler and acuter agony, must be able to see symptoms of internal disorder, when unsuspected by the sufferer himself. He must be himself strong in the faith, and able to give a reason for it, not by cutting off inquiry and doubt, but by showing that the doubt leads no whither, or into more impenetrable darkness; must be strong in his love, for love is contagious in proportion to its strength, and that is measured by its capability for sacrifice. Christian love manifested sometimes wins and cures, when all other remedies fail, and one is drawn to meet it by a compulsion that is divine.

But there is still another function of the Christian ministry,—that to which I alluded in my last lecture. These men are citizens of the *state*, as well as ministers of the *church*. And inasmuch as no change of moment, or great improvement in human conditions, can be effected but by concerted effort, or a widespread consent, these men cannot, or should not withhold themselves from co-operation with their fellow-citizens in any aim intended

to move mankind one step further towards the realization of its brotherhood. As a class, the philanthropic impulse is probably as strong in them, if not stronger, than in any other, though it is often held back by conventional restraints, by an iron-bound conservatism, or by subtle temptations of self-interest. But normally this impulse ought to be stronger than in any other class, because the aim of their office goes beyond the mere temporal welfare of men, and respects their characters, as determining their permanent welfare. Hence, more from this class, in proportion to its numbers, than from any other, take the lead in all efforts after social reform. The ultra-progressive is nurtured here as well as the ultra-conservative. Many, indeed, confine themselves to their own *peculium*, to the narrow circle of their priestly and pastoral relations, as though they had no ties nor obligations beyond, and some strive to deepen the line of separation between the clergy and the laity, and exalt themselves into a *caste*, instead of gladly effacing it when they can legitimately do so. And others, from simple distrust in their own power to influence men,

console themselves by thinking that they have no call of duty beyond their churchly relation. They resolve to do what is incumbent upon them in this, and leave to God to take care of ulterior results, and work out his purposes upon human conditions.

This narrow view, thus variously held, very often characterizes the procedure of young men just beginning the ministerial life. This, their self-imposed limitation, may come, indeed, from diffidence, and be confirmed by habit, but if so, it can be cured. But it may come from a theory of their office—shallow, and not fully honoring God and his methods of dealing with his creatures; a theory which implies that the divine presence and the divine efficiency are confined to the circle and the prescribed rites of the church alone, and this "church" sometimes thought in a very narrow definition. For if, indeed, the naive Christian mind, unbiassed, rejects a notion so narrow, and feels, as a corollary from the divine love itself, that no human beings can be disregarded in the divine mind, that God's plan respects the human race as such, and that he is urging a universal movement, that Christianity is

only a special movement as means towards a universal one; if religion is thought to belong to human nature itself, and cannot be eradicated therefrom, if its pre-suppositions are never absent as determining human activity,—then, since God works by known or providential means, as well as through mystical influences which human intelligence cannot follow, it is incumbent upon even his selected ones who constitute the "*Ecclesia*," to study this providential movement, and throw themselves into the current which God is urging to his own end. And shall the guardians and guides of the Christian people hold themselves back from this? Shall *they* blind themselves to these transcendent relations? It would seem that the privilege and the duty was especially theirs, not only to co-operate with any concerted effort for the improvement of human conditions, not only to acquiesce in and further any effort initiated beyond themselves, or beyond even the church,—but, if they are indeed wiser, and have a wider outlook and more permanent aims, to initiate such effort and to draw others into it, rather than to be themselves drawn into efforts less profoundly

meditated. But just here the knowledge of many of our clergy is deficient. They know so little beyond their particular line of activity, that they stand passive and irresolute amid the movements stirring around them. They have accepted their propositional theology, but know nothing or little of social facts, or political situations and indications; know little of science—and some even foolishly decry it—not seeing that science is the purveyor to theology, and assists it in removing its own unhealthy growths; and some even decry philosophy itself, not knowing that they have already accepted in trust some philosophy, and that a philosophy is implicit in all their theological attainments. They need a larger culture. If the clergy are to hold their own in influencing human action, if they are to entitle themselves to respect in the coming times, our theological *curricula* must be greatly enlarged; our seminaries must be something more than mills turning out products of a monotonous sameness,—rather, products of developed individualities, and able, as any others whatever, to cope with the practical questions becoming yearly more urgent.

We, in our own church, are so intensely conservative, that the commoner tendency is to linger behind in the onward progress. But the need, growing more manifest, will meet its supply in due time. They who shall urge a change in our methods will meet with opposition. There is much *debris* to remove. We older ones feel ourselves entangled in it, but, since near our end, our energy is not sufficient. The coming generation, growing up with the sense of this need, as we did not, will venture farther than we have done, beyond the track so long beaten hard. But the old conservative *inertia* still weighs upon the young mind to keep it in the ruts, and our theological schools only slowly yield to the outer pressure.

The notion so long held, and still surviving, that in the early Christian days the Holy Spirit came once for all, and enlightened to the full the existing generation, which created a *depositum* of faith to be handed on through all time, unchangeable and needing no development, is slowly giving way before the profounder notion that the Holy Spirit is a perennial possession; and that he is *ours* in every sense that he was *theirs;* that he has been busy

in the intervening time, guiding the thread of human history, in its spiritual and true advance, and that we, in our own generation, are wiser than any one that has preceded us, since that one that had inspired men for referees;— a thesis that can have ample speculative, historical, scriptural vindication, but whose antithesis dies hard.

The very doubts, which spring more and more abundantly as the years pass, furnish occasion for the victories of faith, and should never be shunned or dogmatically repressed. We grow wiser only through this dialectic. The victory over a doubt is a new illuminating *addidamentum* to the Truth itself. Till the last the forms of error will grow more subtle, and till the last the wisdom and the skill to expose and vanquish them need to grow and will grow more subtle.

Who, but the ministers, in the Church of Christ, ought to be the leaders, and the trusted ones, upholding the faith of the Christian body, amid assaults whose severity we dream not of now? "When the Son of Man cometh will he find faith on the earth?" He will himself relieve the burden then, and put

an end to the trial. And the ministers of his church ought to be the ones to say: "We have kept these souls true and steady. Here are our ten talents."

LECTURE V.

THE DOCTRINE OF "A NATURE IN GOD."

Philosophers, as poets of the first order, are born, not made. That which distinguishes them may be called *a mental instinct*, —an imperious intellectual demand for unity and self-coherence in all knowledge. An hiatus, or a problem of difficult solution is an irritating spur which urges towards the filling up of the one, or the satisfying settlement of the other. The entirety of knowledge must be woven into an harmonious whole, the immanent relations of all whose elements are clearly seen, or at least divined, and hence the struggle after clear expression. In the philosophic mind the principle or category of causality, which rules all thought-movement, is as manifest as it is in the scientific mind. The difference is that the latter, as purely such, deals with only partial material. The craving for a unified system is not so strong, but that it often wilfully shuts its eyes to other knowledge, which

too must be incorporated for the full understanding of its own. When science extends its view and takes in the entire field, it is obliged to become philosophic. Here, in this whole round or scope of knowledge, nothing is unimportant. In the endeavor, then, to weave into one piece, to unify all fact, all consciousness, all movement or change, these must be traced back to some antecedent origin or cause, which must account for their existence, their mutual relations, and their changing relations, or development. Something in the First Principle is not yet apprehended if any fact, or phase of consciousness refuses to march into line with the rest. No problem must be slurred over; yet the temptation to do this is strong. Even the most encyclopedic minds find themselves obliged to neglect something, or wilfully do it, seduced by the charm of some solution which seems in other respects to satisfy. And just the perception of this causes others to reconsider the problem, and thus philosophy takes its advance. Some fresher intellect broods again over the dark spots, with a sublime discontent. It is a pity that

it often expresses itself too soon, and has afterwards to undo its former work. It is a pity that the impulse to rush into publication in the earlier periods of the thought-history could not have been restrained; or, at least, that the expression could not have been kept for a longer period, simply for the private convenience. We see this illustrated in the history of many of our philosophers. Schelling rushed into print early in life, and had afterwards to undo much of his former work. Even Fichte's thought can only be rightly apprehended in his later writings. And Hegel's was a constant growth,—though, in his case, after a satisfying centre, or method, was obtained, there was little afterwards to be undone; but even he neglected some problems, or probed them not profoundly enough to win satisfaction and compel adherence. At the very best, in our conventional, cultured life, the desire for reputation, or even the purer craving for recognition, becomes a bias, more or less strong, to deflect and trouble the pure thinking.

I have been led to these remarks by having looked somewhat into the thought-sys-

tem of Jacob Boehme, as interpreted by Dr. Martensen. Here we have a native born philosopher, with few advantages of education and culture, in whose mind the great problems of knowledge and existence were seething and surging, and whose insights were endeavoring to crystallize into shape and symmetry. For lack of mastery over the means of expression, such as have become familiar to all cultured men, he was obliged to invent a technique of his own. His thoughts are so couched in symbols, that on this account chiefly, as is probable, he is usually spoken of as a mystic. Not referring here to another and profounder definition of this word, I may say that his constant use of symbolic expressions shows rather the poetic attitude, which too, in a different way, seeks to express and illustrate the underlying harmony. But his thought is that of a philosopher, who, without acquaintance with former systems, or familiarity with solutions already given, and unused to customary modes of expression, found himself face to face with these great problems. Courageously he chased up all fact, all doctrine to its antecedent

source or possibility, and would not leave anything neglected. In his mind there was no *debris*, left by former systems, to be cast out. Thus his mental movement was unsophisticated and comparatively pure, and he dealt with his problems at first hand, and with the least conceivable mental bias. He had not the advantage, which sometimes becomes a disadvantage, of acquaintance with the previous tentatives of human thought, and in consequence of this made himself liable to criticism. But the naive utterances of one who had such marvelous insights, such honest mental requirement of truth, make him worthy of study. Some precious riches are to be brought away from this mine. What foregone bias there was came from his education in the Christian Church, whose doctrines he took for granted must be true, and he sought to reconcile them with the absolute truth, or rather to bring out their meaning as expressions of the same. But, indeed, no one reared in Christian countries can escape this bias. Nor can any one in countries not Christian escape a similar bias. The received religion has

entered into the mind before the life of thought begins. And even where no such objective influence exists, or exists in least possible degree, the mind itself, before the philosophic impulse begins to stir, has already formed and acted upon its natural religion. And this seeming disadvantage of a previous mental bias, in the search for truth may turn out to be an advantage. The bias is native born, and may be sophisticated by an imperfect religion, or corrected by one which is perfect and true. If true, it will coalesce more readily with the religion which is implicit in the structure of the human mind itself.

Boehme did not rest till he had vindicated the truth of Christian doctrine to his satisfaction.

It is no part of my purpose to treat of Boehme's philosophy in general, but only to notice that his thinking brought him face to face with a question which has troubled the philosophers and theologians all along, and which for himself he solved; reaching the conclusion, that there is in and for the Eternal First Principle, a *Nature*. Not to mention

that, in forms clear or obscure, this conception may be found in all the previous ages, and is notably present in the Christian Scriptures,—in Boehme's mind it was subjected to a profound speculative analysis. His thought has been availed of by subsequent writers, notably by Oetinger, by the Roman Catholic philosopher, Baader, by Schelling, Rothe and Martensen. The coincidence of these with Boehme is great, if not strict, except in the case of Schelling; whose speculation allies itself readily with a semi-pantheistic form of doctrine, a kind of philosophic Sabellianism, which may have its own critique.*

In this scheme creation is a metaphysical necessity in and for the Divine Being, is that whereby he reaches true personality, and other personality becomes possible. Hence a determined universe is as eternal as the pure spirit-ground,—*i. e.*, thought and energy.

In the other scheme, which Boehme implies, though his utterances are sometimes ambiguous, and in which the other writers I have named agree, creation is a free activity. The First Principle is complete in itself, and

*This may be found, in brief form, in appendix A, of the first volume of my work, "Christian Doctrine Harmonized."

under no physical or metaphysical necessity to create. What may be predicated is a moral necessity, which however is only rightly thought as love, self-consistent, whose idea evaporates if freedom is denied. It presupposes an ideal end, and the impulse to find reciprocation. Could all things be comprised in a physical or logical *nexus*, love and freedom would have been impossible as truths, or even as ideas. Their presence in the human consciousness, if it could be, would be the delusion of delusions. They would be absolutely uncaused. But indeed they could not be found there.

But the problem is, how,—this determined universe being given, this peopled space, these masses, with their laws and motions, the spiritual characteristics of the human beings on this planet, human history and development, the glimpses of an end and aim, all facts and phases of consciousness whatever, — how to account for it as thus determined; whether this can be done by assuming as its origin and motive power a merely or purely spiritual principle. The attempt so to do has met with objection enough, and just here it is that

materialism possesses what strength it has. It contends that we cannot explain material existence and movement from merely spiritual grounds. In this the materialists are as firm as their opponents are, who contend that spiritual truths and results cannot be explained from mere physical antecedents. The one position seems as impregnable as the other. The failure of this last endeavor has become manifest, and is acknowledged; while many advocates of the former contention, while right in their negation, have no positive affirmation to supply instead, except the old formula of *creation out of nothing*, which, when scrutinized, proves to have no meaning, and is simply a confession of mental impotence. Moreover the Christian Scriptures authorize the use of no such formula. On the contrary, their authors seem by their carefulness in the use of words, expressly to guard against it.

The need of reconciliation here was apparent to the unsophisticated mind of Boehme, and however unclear his expressions upon other doctrines, just here his virgin thought is found to have confirmation in that of some

who went before, and has commended itself to the eminent philosophic theologians whom I have named above. But this doctrine, while I acknowledge a valid ground for it, has not been expressed in a manner so satisfying to me, as to lift it above criticism. Its latest advocate and interpreter, Dr. Martensen, may be taken to have possessed whatever truth may have been precipitated by the thinking of his predecessors.

Just here it is necessary at once to remove a misconception, and Martensen says rightly: "When Nature is affirmed in God it is in comparison with what *we* call nature, something infinitely subtle and supermaterial,—is not matter at all, but rather a source for matter, a plenitude of living forces and energies." This full sentence contains, in my view, both truth and error,—or, at least, is inadequately expressed; and, without treating of the matter exhaustively, I shall accomplish my immediate purpose, by criticising the latter and elaborating the former.

The misconception to which he alludes is commonplace enough. The doctrine of a Nature in God is objected to as if it affirmed

an eternal universe, a material entity outside of God, which thus denies the old formula, namely, a "something out of nothing." This it does, indeed, but it does not affirm an eternal universe, for a universe means something determined, and of which predications may be made. The doctrine does not affirm this, but declares the possibility of this. It would trace back the known universe, so far as it has spiritual characteristics to its ground in the absolute spirit, but since the universe is also material, it would discover the ground or possibility of this also. We owe to the determined universe the notion or idea of the absolute spirit ; and we owe to it, likewise, the discovery of something that must be synthesized by spirit to become the known universe. In this pure ground there must be the absence of all determinations, for if any exist, it is identified at once with the known universe, and the universe appears as eternal. Thus then, we must abstract whatever is known of the universe, but we cannot abstract that which has received the determinations, which still remains for pure thought. The only thing that can be said about it is that it

is that which synthesized by spirit becomes the universe. We do not know the absolute ground of spirit, until it breaks into the distinctions of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—*i. e.*, is determined; but we assume it, or are obliged to think it, nevertheless. But, as the known universe is in movement and change, and undergoes development, there must be in the pure ground the possibility of such movement. But all development occurs only when the pure ground is synthesized by spirit, for its movement always betrays the idea, and thus thought and energy are its spiritual presuppositions.

Here, now, may come in my critique of Martensen. He says: "This Nature is not matter, but rather a source for matter." So far right, but he adds: "a plenitude of living forces and energies." Here now I find myself bewildered. "Forces." What are *forces*, but energy dealing with existing material, and causing movements for the realization of an idea. And why add "energies," unless to amplify the notion of forces. These, "idea," "thought," "abstract energy," belong to spirit and have their ground in that. Energy be-

comes "force," only by virtue of this very "Nature," which is hypothecated. "Forces," can be understood and imagined. If there were anything in this "Nature" which could be understood and imagined, it would not be undetermined. We have not clearly posited it until, having removed all possibility for understanding and imagination, it still remains for pure thought and is a requirement of reason, for the moment spirit enters it, it becomes the object of knowledge. The principle of causality still prevails as the law of the reason and the fundamental category for thinking; and the ground for the material required for the exhibition of *force* is just as necessary and imperious a requirement for thinking as the ground for the spiritual, seeing that all force makes thought real or manifests thought. The word "force," as an abstract term may then be conveniently discarded. "Forces" are the modes of the Divine Energy, in their movement and play, in their contests and *equilibria*, accomplishing concrete existence and change.

This "Nature" in God means, then, the possibility of the material. From pure spirit

alone you can never deduce the material. In the attempt to do so you simply postulate energy and thought on the one side, and an intelligible result in the other, with no copula, no connection, no affirmation, nothing that the mind can think, between them.

What this felt, seen, perceived, conceived matter is or was in its simplest or primal form, science has not shown us, and will never show us. It can simply carry us back by its analysis to the point where we must part with all exercise of understanding and imagination, and there it leaves us. The pure thought-faculty, in its demand for co-ordination, steps in here and rescues the *residuum*, and that which is in itself barren, becomes fruitful when synthesized by spirit. The Christian Scriptures have a name for this *residuum*, and call it the "Divine Doxa." Thus the last result of scientific painstaking and of philosophic thought succeeding, has been anticipated in the Christian Scriptures.

The notion of the Divine Doxa has been degraded by making it something dependent upon human subjective estimation, or at least the foresight of this in the divine mind.

That is, it is nothing real, but only something that emerges when the real comes to be. If, in this regard it is something eternal, then transcendent existence and intelligence outside of God must be thought as eternal, and creation appears as a necessary thing; in which case, if development be needful, we have the result of development without its pre-conditions. We have either a stagnant *plenum* already reached, or a cyclical movement. The very notion of a free creation implies an ideal end in the divine mind, and therefore a beginning.

The Christian Scriptures do not speak of the Divine Doxa in terms implying spiritual categories. It is not anything needful for the definition of pure spirit, but, indeed, something to make the activity of the concrete spirit beyond itself possible. It is spoken of rather by physical symbols or analogies. Nay, it almost undergoes identification with the pure *light*, and as that in which no darkness or contrast exists. Thus, it has as yet no interior contrast, but is itself a contrast to the pure spirit.*

* "But, not less wonderful are certain luminous spots or patches, which discover themselves only by the Telescope, and appear to the naked eye like

Boehme had this insight, that something must be posited in the First Principle which can make possible a determined universe, and this shaped itself to him in the form of a *contrast;* and he affirms that the ever-exist-

small fixed stars, but in reality are nothing else but the Light coming from an extraordinary great space in the ether ; through which a lucid *medium* is diffused, that shines with its own proper Luster. This seems fully to reconcile that Difficulty which some have moved against the Description Moses gives of the creation, alleging that Light could not be created without the Sun. But in the following instances the contrary is manifest ; for some of these bright spots discover no sign of a star in the middle of them ; and the irregular form of those that have shows them not to proceed from the Illumination of a Central Body, since they have no annual parallax. They cannot fail to occupy spaces immensely great, and perhaps not less than our whole Solar System. In all these so vast spaces it should seem that there is a perpetual uninterrupted Day, which may furnish matter for speculation as well to the curious Naturalist, as to the Astronomer."—EDMUND HALLEY. *Philosophical Transactions. Vol. 29, p. 392.*

Mr. Lockyer, in quoting the above, remarks that Maupertius as well as Halley laid great stress upon the possible luminosity of sparse masses of matter in space.

Aproj os to this, I have read somewhere an account of certain experiments which went to show, that matter, when extremely attenuated, became self-luminous ; but I have not seen since any repetition, or authentication of the same.

All this falls in with my *a priori* suggestion just made, that Light was the first determination of the Divine Doxa, hence the primal form of its manifestation, in which were the tokens of created existence. Thus this word, "light" has both subjective and objective significance. Also that the next subsequent determination was the diremption of this light into the clear and the obscure, in which is contrast and relation, and the possibility of all future relations. Science has found the cosmic dust, and may have found the contrasted light. But by what process the latter becomes the former, it does not and cannot tell us. Only when synthesized by spirit, determined by thought and pure energy, does it come within the domain of knowledge. We may speculate here, and ask whether the obscure does not come from the retardation or limitation of motion rather than by its acceleration. From which it would seem to follow that the Divine Doxa itself was not rest, but infinite motion. Here, again, we have in the physical realm the *dialectic,* which appears as the law of creative activity, as well as of the thought-movement.

Thoughts like these, or visions of all this, seem to have been in the minds of the Scripture writers, as they are dimly and incoherently in ours. We acknowledge the inadequacy of language to express them, and *they* seem to have felt the same difficulty.

ing contrast in the known universe, between the spiritual and the material, obtains in the *Primum* itself. But Boehme falls into an error, or at least renders himself liable to a misconception, by confusing the notion of *contrast* with that of *contradiction*, and thus his expression sometimes seems to lay a basis for the existence of evil as necessary. On this account he has been accused of Manicheeism. This vibration between the true and false view of *contrast* confuses him, and makes the expression of his thought unclear. Martensen vindicates him, and probably justly, from the charge of consciously holding the necessity of evil, with which indeed other parts of his works are inconsistent.

Contradiction is that which is repugnant to the essence of a thing, while contrast is a necessary difference which emerges from that idea or essence itself. Thus beneficence and severity in the Ruler of mankind are contrasts, yet they are both forms of the same thing, the divine love taking one shape or another, according as the recipient is loving or unloving. But moral good and evil are contradictory, for if the latter be

thought as necessary, the conception of it as violation of the absolute law obtaining in the structure of the universe is lost. In the history of human thinking the temptation has been very great to regard evil as part of a necessary process, in which evil is the dialectic, and thus that it and good are mere contrasts. The willingness to abide in such a solution betrays a weakness in many philosophers, and shows that the gasping endeavor after a unity, in sheer weariness, has allowed itself to be content with a premature and too easy a solution. It is humiliating, indeed, to find that there is one dark abyss, which the human mind has not, as yet, light enough to illumine, and moral evil is that abyss. Its possibility, its ideal attractiveness, may be admitted as a requirement for spiritual development, but its actuality can by no means be admitted as necessary. The whole edifice of spiritual thought, thereby undergoes a *bouleversement.* We hold then that in the First Principle there is contrast, but no contradiction, and that this contrast is furnished by the Divine Doxa.

This doctrine of a "Nature in God" does not appear in Boehme or Martensen in precisely the form in which I have presented it.* They both acknowledge that, quite independent of the created world, there is an internal and external phenomenal manifestation in God himself,—but in using this word "phenomenal" there is carried into the notion of the Divine Doxa, determinations, derived from human experience and analogies, and an appeal is made to imagination. This wonderful faculty of the human mind leaps into activity at the slightest hint, but as it has no material to deal with here, any results it may reach and enjoy are not trustworthy for pure thought. Also Martensen throws out the conjecture whether angelic existence does not belong to this sphere, before the determinations which constitute the known universe came to be, and that angels communicate with each other, and have communion

* I may be allowed to say that my own thought upon these questions has been entirely independent, and that the conclusions I have reached were before I had read anything of Jacob Boehme, or Martensen's critique of his scheme. Those who are familiar with these latter will perceive that there are points of agreement, and also points of entire disagreement. I cannot in this lecture explicate these points, but must confine myself to the isolated topic which is its title, and this, too, cannot be treated in an exhaustive manner. It receives fuller treatment in the text, and in one of the appendices of the first volume of my work "Christian Doctrine Harmonized."

with God through organs or *media*, which imply determinations of the Divine Doxa. This cannot be denied as possible, but it cannot be made a matter of knowledge. There is the same difficulty and obscurity about it that there is about the inquiry how departed human souls communicate with each other.

The Divine Doxa is spoken of in the Christian Scriptures as something in which they delight, and if so, it cannot be for Father, Son and Holy Spirit, anything barren. But it passeth knowledge. Wonderful as it is, it is to be shared by the perfected creature,—but he, to share it must pass through a prior obscuration. *We* are in this obscuration, and if angels now, or ever, shared the pure glory, they must have passed through an obscuration. And the inquiry emerges whether the whole question of angelic existence would not have fewer difficulties, if their creation is regarded as subsequent and not anterior to the determinations which constitute our universe. There are difficulties in the way of thinking that they could have shared *ab initio* the pure glory. That which God did not ever bestow

is *self-existence.* Since he eternally bestows self-existence, that which he bestows is also God, and thus we have the generation of the Son from the Father. Now, in our thought, the Godhead becomes fructifying, and love is an eternal act, whereby is the Holy Spirit. But that which is not eternally self-existent, must have a beginning. The highest exhibition or act of love, when it transcends the self-existent, is the bringing into being that which can reciprocate it. To be made perfect by the divine *fiat* is a lower effort of divine love, than if the created spirit is to create himself as to his moral form. Therefore he must undergo development in the sphere that is set him, and arise out of the nature ground. For him the Divine Glory must be obscured that he by his own effort may become fit for the removal of the obscuration. And angels cannot be free from this need. Otherwise they are a far lower order of created spirits than man himself, and moral evil could never be predicated as possible or actual for them.

Thus the determinations of the Divine Glory appear as a *process.* How wonderfully this unfolds itself to our vision! Here science fur-

nishes constantly new food for our imagination and delight. How poor would our existence be were it only spiritual! The reality of the Divine love is shown by the existence and the movement of the material. This constitutes God's organ of communication with all possible spirits, and is the means for the enrichment of their being. In this wealthy field the soul, as imagination, may play unchecked, and how wonderful are the results it achieves! Man's victories over it and comprehension of it have been incessant, and the desire for further knowledge and power grows more intense, and has an ever-deepening hope or conviction that it will be forever gratified. And if God is infinite in resource, is transcendent as well as immanent, his thoughts can never be exhausted, and illimitable time will bring no weariness nor cessation of growth and activity.

When thought as pure spirit, as transcendent only, and aloof from his glory, and its possibilities, the Divine Being appears as cold, self-sufficient, unapproachable. The universe shows that he can be approached, and be an object for the heart, as well as for the

mind. How the infinite space is, through astronomic efforts, becoming filled with wonders! What a harvest is here for human intelligence, what possibilities of delight! And all this too, must enter into the divine delight. And now, if we ask, if the divine delight existed anterior to these determinations which make the universe known to us as possible to furnish delight,—if Jesus could say: 'Glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," let us remember that while about the Divine Doxa, before the determinations which make it an object for our knowledge, we can make no positive affirmations, we are authorized to make no negative ones. We are not obliged to think the divine love, under time conditions, as inactive, and that the Divine Being can be affirmed as not forever transcending himself, for thereby the very notion of the divine love is put to risk. But at the same time no one can affirm that God transcended himself in any form that can come within the scope of our present knowledge. And this mysterious reserve of possibilities is only an affirmation of the divine infinity.

It is an axiom that no concrete existence is simple; for, if you affirm any thing whatever of it, you imply relations to something else. Thus the Godhead, to be a sufficient first principle, can not be thought as a simple. Hence the absolute need for our thought that we should discover the immanent relations which constitute the definition of pure spirit. Herein too is displayed on one side the possibility of its transcending itself, and if the possibility, then the actuality. Here occurs the Doxa as furnishing the possibility of this on the other side, and thus it is assumed as eternal, or out of time, but not in any determined form in time. To find in the Doxa itself eternal immanent relations would seem to promise to render easier the explanation of the actual universe. And hence Boehme thought that he had discovered in it such relations as could make possible the form of the actual determination. The success of this and the need of this we have questioned, declaring that the synthesizing of the pure glory by spirit is all that is required. But this does not deny the possibility of determinations before our known determinations. The Christian Scrip-

tures afford us no help for our thought here, yet they do speak of the Divine Doxa in such terms, as to startle the human mind and awaken its hope and aspirations. Human longings are as much physical as spiritual. In this is the explanation of the emotion of the beautiful, and if this have an objective ground, then beauty is eternal, and God shares to the full the delight we have in it, and it is for us the most captivating and entrancing characteristic of all his works. The flowers that bloom in the recesses of the wilderness, the bright colors in the ocean depths, the whirling spirals of the nebulæ, all form, color, motion is accompanied by the divine delight, and such as even we can reproduce in ourselves. Thus no one can affirm that a perpetual outpouring of the beautiful has not existed from all eternity, or that there is any limit to its possible variety or change.

The coincidence of the intimations of the Christian Scriptures with the finest results of human thinking in all its branches (æsthetics here included as illustration), is for us an evidence that there is a divine element in them, anticipating the last human mental

achievements, and keeps alive the belief that they are more profound than all science and do really contain the ultimate philosophy. If so, they cannot have been, as yet, exhausted as to their meaning; and the progress of human knowledge in other pathways must continually bring out new meanings and correct all foregone misapprehensions. It does not follow that they need to be always coincident with our empirical knowledge, seeing that this is in perpetual flux; but that the essential thought, the developing idea which underlies all phenomenal changes, has been intuited more clearly by their authors than by the rest of us. The deepest thought must elude the possibilities of language, which has grown up from mere superficial knowledge, and hence can only express itself by symbols. And here one can recall the numerous expressions in the Scriptures concerning the divine glory, as though it were something that could be made apparent to human vision. Moses' burning bush, the transfigured garments on the mount, St. Stephen's shining face, the vague images of the Apocalypse—all these show the profound conviction in the minds

of those who recorded these things of the presence of something wonderful that could only be expressed by symbol.

Holding this notion of the Divine Doxa in our thought, gives fixedness and perpetuity to the existing universe. It is not to "pass away as a dream when one awaketh." According to the old formula that which sprang out of the absolute nothing may return to the absolute nothing. There is no contradiction involved. But if the ground of the material universe is itself eternal, and the divine glory is needful for the divine delight (which is something more than self-contemplation, or imaginative reproduction of the infinite resources of the Logos), if the divine thoughts are acts, and their spring is love, and their final cause reciprocal love, extending forever in space and time, then we have warrant to think the perpetuity of the material universe, and that we have not prized it and cannot prize it too highly. Out of its capacities are to come our own growth and enrichment in knowledge, and a sphere for our own activity. God is richer and fuller for our conception. The doctrine of resurrection, or physical glori-

fication, receives new confirmation. They who deny it have not valued enough the material universe, and give us but an impoverished field upon which to indulge our imagination. Philosophy may value chiefly the thought which the analysis of the material universe reveals, but the emotion accompanying this is too cold. The poetic attitude is warmer, regards the symbols of thought as living things, and thus its scope is wider and so truer than that of philosophy itself. Thus the allegation that poets hold truth and fact in the most consistent synthesis, and thus that they are the nearest to the secret of the universe, receives even speculative confirmation.

LECTURE VI

THE IMPOTENCE AND THE RIGHT USE OF IMAGINATION IN DEALING WITH CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

In the lecture which follows I endeavor to point out the source of many of the untenable or incoherent views of Christian doctrine which have been hindrances in the way of advance in theologic science.

I give only a specimen, for to treat the topic exhaustively would require the composition of a treatise, which I may at some day undertake. There would thus be furnished another evidence that the solution of all problems, whether of physical science, psychology, or theology, depends upon the philosophy or ideal construction of the whole fabric of knowledge, which is implicit in the mind of one who attempts it. He who endeavors to build up his system upon exegetical or historic grounds solely is quite as much dominated by his philosophy as he who pursues any other method.

Imagination is commonly spoken or written of as the *representative* faculty—that which takes up the impressions derived through the senses, and which have become perceptions by falling into the moulds supplied by the understanding, and reproduces them in consciousness as accurately as possible, or recombines them into a new result having apparent unity, so as to present them thus to the mind for its work or its play.

The linking together the material supplied by memory, in a loose or arbitrary way, is sometimes called Fancy; while the unifying of this content so as to produce a self-consistent whole has been spoken of as the work of imagination proper, thus distinguished. Both mental movements are partly spontaneous and partly deliberate. The passivity is only seeming. The activity is actual even in the most apparent spontaneity, and may consist in its lowest degree merely in the will's refraining from any interference with the play of association, and holding the mind steady during this riot of images. But a more manifestly willful procedure is when the mind yields to the attraction to pass be-

yond itself, to infuse itself into the image, and reproduce itself in its life; when it *becomes*, as it were, for the time being that which it contemplates. This activity is always accompanied by emotion, a kind of melting of the individual life into the universal life, or that of some of its concretions. Thus imagination comes to be called the *creative* faculty.

Manifestly in all these procedures the mind deals only with the concrete, with ideas or thoughts which have been made real and sensible. When by pure thinking the abstract idea has been disengaged, it becomes matter for thought solely; and imagination is robbed of its material. It can do nothing with the naked ideas except by clothing them again with the body which has been abstracted. But so habitual and constant in every human being has become its exercise, that it vainly or revengefully still continues to intrude into the region of the pure ideas, annuls the abstraction, blinds itself to the fact that it has done so, engaging the mind, meanwhile, to draw inferences only valid if the abstraction has not been made, and thus beclouds or distorts the ideas themselves. All which has

been the source of constant mistake or confusion in many mental endeavors, as well as in the meditation upon distinctively religious truth. Thus imagination is a faculty which, more than any other, needs restraining and regulating, and to have its proper function clearly defined.

It would be interesting, in this connection, to make a comparison, so far as it can be made, between this faculty in the brute (which manifestly possesses and uses it) and in the human being; between its exercise when dealing with material undetermined by spirit-relations, and with that so determined. But this would be an independent and a large topic.

The faculty of imagination is a universal human possession, yet exists in individuals in different degrees of activity. Probably its degrees are ruled by physical or physiological conditions rather than by spiritual ones. On account of these it varies in quickness and vividness, and in the extent of its range; yet in every one it is in constant activity, mediates the whole passage from abstract consciousness to any act of will, presents the immediate or

remote result which gives end and impetus to action. It sometimes carries the mind out of itself so completely as to reduce the pure thought power almost to passivity, to make the man the victim of some image or ideal presentation which alone he sees, to the exclusion of everything else. This fact must affect his actual responsibility, and teaches us that to judge of the absolute moral worth of a man or his actions is no superficial problem, but one requiring no less than the divine insight.

The errors, delusions, superstitions, impure or incoherent philosophies which have been so rife in human history, all probably owe their origin largely to the misuse of imagination.

To exhibit some of the unfortunate results of its dealing with theological doctrines, or problems related thereto, to show thus its impotence, and then to point out and limit its true function in dealing with such matter, is my present design.

All the object-matter with which imagination may successfully deal is contained in space. These bounded spaces, made real by the senses of sight and touch, are its proper material. But imagination tries to compass

the absolute space itself, to try its wing in the illimitable. It projects the self-consciousness into the infinite abyss, passes beyond the planets and stars and systems, to which it must give relative location, passes beyond them to find itself in pure vacancy, with an interminable distance before it, rendered no less by any speed or any duration of time. It must abandon the endeavor, and confess its impotence, in dealing with absolute space. Instead of concluding, then, that pure space is not for imagination, but for pure thought only, the mind, as represented by this faculty, still abides in its delusion, and supplies further objects on which it may rest, and after the exhaustion of its known objects supplies an attenuated ether, or locates a far-distant heaven or paradise or hell; all which inventions may become delusions, not necessarily mischievous, but certainly troubling and misleading the thinking faculty in its search after the truth.

This, the mind's impotence to compass the infinite space, has been noted and so dealt with by Sir William Hamilton and by Dean Mansel, as to lead them to deny or misinter-

pret the mind's idea of the infinite, making it but a negation of the finite, and the result of the limitation of the human intellect, they not perceiving that the finite and infinite are correlatives; that one implies the other; that one is as positive as the other; that they are pure thoughts only, though necessary ones, and apprehended by a mental movement in which imagination takes no part.

Yet this endeavor to compass the infinite need not be repressed, and has its own high reward. It brings about the emotion of the sublime. Though ending in failure, the mind has been expanded, has attempted a larger life than its customary one, and thus is hinted that we are intended and fitted for a larger life, that our career is to be an endless growth, a projection toward an ever-receding circumference—a life that will grow richer and richer forever and forever as it meets and appropriates the ever-during outgushings from the supernal and inexhaustible fountain.

Imagination may and does rightly deal much with human beings as concretes, with human souls as related to and determined by the physical organization and environment.

But it has not restrained itself from attempting to deal with the spiritual *psyche*, with the human soul aloof from its bodily organization. It follows it beyond the article of death, and fills that whole region with delusions.

For our present knowledge, death is the severance of the existing bond connecting the human being with the physical universe, *as we know it.* Though by pure thinking we may find ourselves obliged to acknowledge that we cannot regard the spiritual soul after death as entirely out of relation to the physical universe, as without an environment, without organs or *media* of communication; yet this relation is an abstract one for thought, and cannot be described in the terms of our present knowledge. Hence imagination is without its proper material, and if it attempts to disport itself here, it can only do so by covertly importing back the body and its physical relations, which, according to our present knowledge, have been abandoned, or changed into something which defies conjecture. With what material imagination may deal legitimately here needs to be carefully defined; and

we shall see, later on, that it is not entirely without function.

In these, its vagaries, it dilutes the material which it brings back to suit its purpose. It deals with matter still, but with matter attenuated more and deprived of some of its properties. Thus we have stories of ghosts, of spiritual souls, which can be seen and heard, and are either without gravity, or which might be touched were our senses fine enough. Thus the human soul is still figured as a material entity, located or moving in the absolute space. The world of our knowledge and the body of our mundane consciousness are thus resupplied, and the mind's endeavor to make the proper abstractions and draw the proper inferences is clogged and troubled. We need hardly here refer to the delusions and superstitions which have arisen from this source.

Thus, too, we have Heaven and Paradise and Gehenna, figured as having locality in space, fixed or relatively moving; and all the characteristics of our home planet carried into them; all which need not be necessarily harmful, and may have, when regulated, some practical use, but which again troubles our pure

thinking, and beclouds the clearness of our doctrines. This has been a perpetual mass of *debris* for theology to clear away in its endeavored advance.

Modern science has been very helpful to theology in removing these delusions. It has taught us that the whole material universe is in flux and movement; that no "thing" is at any moment what it was the moment before; that the universe has been, is, and is to be an evolution, moving steadily on to an end, which it is our endeavor to forecast and interpret; that the human body is no fixed aggregation of material particles; that its identity is not material, but ideal, a synthesis of the fixed and the changeable. In this way, through our advancing knowledge of ourselves and the world we live in, have many false notions held in the human mind, and in the Christian mind as well, been dissipated. The doctrine of the resurrection, or physical glorification, has been thus thought out more profoundly and satisfactorily, and all knowledge moved many steps toward harmonization.

All this corrected knowledge has weakened greatly the propensity to intolerance which

besets the natural man, and out of which Christianity is intended progressively to lead him. We have less than once of superstition, of idolatry, of bigotry and cruelty; though, alas! the tension of the elastic cord by which Christianity draws man away from these, and which is not yet severed, is relaxed, and he subsides back into them too often.

In another respect likewise imagination has proven to be a dead-weight to thought, and has caused the mind to sink back into the obscure when it was about to mount into the light; has caused it to deny or be blind, when it was about to welcome the truth. And here, now, I must ask thoughtful attention, for the argument is very subtle.

Science endeavors, by abstraction, to analyze the material universe. It thinks away vitality and chemistry, and tries unsuccessfully to think away mechanical laws, and finding that it cannot do that, simplifies them. In all this process imagination has been active and useful. It brings us at length from the manifestly heterogeneous to the apparently homogeneous. It gives us the nebular hypothesis, figures an immense aggregation of similar particles, ex-

tremely attenuated, removed from all possibility of relation to our present senses, and these in motion—motion according to an idea, however, and whose result is our present universe. If thought abstracts motion from this mass, it is left dead and alien, and these particles are out of all relation, except relative location in space. To make it living and productive motion must be resupplied from the spirit realm, which furnishes the pure energy, the idea, and the final cause. As long, however, as size, shape, and relative location are left to the particles of this attenuated matter, imagination may still deal with these, though not fruitfully. Philosophic thinking must either assume this *stadium* as permanent or eternal, or must account for it. To assume it as permanent or eternal gives us the Platonic Duality, which so lowers our conception of the divine that the mind refuses to rest in it. Besides, absolute rest is a pure hypothesis, with no philosophic need for it, and no *a posteriori* evidence to support it or even for more than a moment suggest it. Thus philosophy takes up the problem where science leaves it, and endeavors to account for the existence of matter,

reduced by science to its simplest form. But it is evident that at this stage of the mental procedure imagination is left without a foothold. If size, shape, and relative locality are abstracted, it has no longer any material with which to deal. The philosophic procedure now retires to the contemplation of spirit. It finds there only the immanent relations of the Godhead, required to think personality, thought and love. What has been called the *actus purus* is only a timeless relation. Activity, in the sense of energy producing change, is a time conception, and carries us at once beyond the compass of pure spirit. There must be a somewhat upon which it is exercised. *Ex-hypothese* it is not something alien, limiting the divine activity ; therefore it must be somewhat eternal and essential to the constitution of the first principle itself.

If the attempt is made to think activity within the circle of pure spirit, it evaporates into the conception of relation solely, and out of this no universe can ever come. That there is a somewhat belonging to the eternal constitution of the Godhead which cannot be spoken of in the terms of pure

spirit the Scriptures everywhere assert or imply; and they call it the Divine Doxa, speak of it as shared by Father, Son, and Spirit before all creation. Hence creation itself is but the determination of this by the divine thought and energy. Thus science, philosophy, and revelation, all lead us by their several pathways to this, and in this way find their desired reconciliation.

But now occurs the obscuration and confusion wrought by imagination. The mind, instead of resting content with the recognition of this to which it has been led by pure thinking, yields to the impulse of imagination, and attempts to deal with this abstract divine glory, which it can only do by bringing back the very relations which have been abstracted, and dealing with it as if determined. Thus the very duality which thought had avoided is brought back by imagination.

When thus presented, revelation and philosophy present their objections to this duality, and rightly; yet the ordinary mind, and even the theological mind, still fet-

tered by the imaginative delusion, comes to deny or fail to apprehend the divine glory as anything objective, and degrades it into a mere subjective something, to which no meaning whatever can be attached except by presupposing the possible regard of created intelligence; and thus it is lost to the mind as anything eternal or divine. It is commonly regarded as the divine wealth of ideas merely, for which we have another word, the divine Logos, or the divine complacency or love, not seeing that this can undergo no suspension or diminution.

Yet the Scriptures interpose many safeguards against this tendency. They nowhere identify the divine glory with pure being, or thought, or love. They make it the property of neither Father, Son, nor Holy Spirit, except through mutual possession. They speak of it as something shared by them, as something by virtue of which the universe may become and has become, and which the universe declares and shows forth. They connect it rather with the material than the spiritual; never speak of it in the

terms of spirit, but rather as that from which the material in its first form came. Its first determination, according to these writings, was the creation of Light, which to be known as *light* by those yet to be, and for whom was the creative fiat, must be contrasted with the obscure. God only lives in the pure glory. All created intelligence must live in the determined light, and from this contrast of the clear and the obscure all the boundless richness and the varied beauty of the universe have become.

Thus the interference of imagination has so presented this doctrine to the mind as to make it objectionable, and has led to the denial or the oblivion of an essential truth. It has brought about this prolonged discord between revelation, philosophy, and science, and hindered the work of unification. That which ought to be, and is, a mere negative attitude of the mind halting, as imagination, before that to which it has been led by abstraction, yet, as the pure thought power, availing itself of it to unify its content, is contorted into a positive attitude asserting something, which, if any pre-

dications whatever are made concerning it, must be regarded as still material. Thus to the naked idea which thought requires as essential to unification, Imagination has given body and content; has thus hung a weight upon thought, and confused and postponed the attempted clarification of Christian doctrine.

As the positive result of what has been said thus far it follows that "creation" and "evolution" are the same thing, and that the former is only rightly thought as the latter. But this doctrine of the divine immanence is rescued from the charge of pantheism only by holding at the same time the divine transcendence, *i. e.* that the universe *as we know it*, or may ever know it, does not exhaust the sum of the divine capacities. Rather, the conception of the Godhead which we have reached, as essential love, by which only it is an adequate First Principle, implies an eternal activity, and a persistent transcendence. And God is immanent in every such out-going. But the results of the divine activity exclusive of the result which has come, and is coming within

our knowledge, are closed for our present thought. The universe of our possible knowledge does not meet the requirements of our *aspiration*.

Also, in dealing with the Godhead in its immanent relations, with it as pure spirit, imagination has led into incoherent views, not necessarily harmful, but also into errors which are mischievous and have caused many of the strifes and divisions of Christendom.

The declarations of the Christian Scriptures authorize the ascription of personality to what is called the Father, as well as to that which is called the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; and also the ascription to each of these of essential divinity. To reconcile these statements is a problem for pure thinking, in which the Christian mind regards itself as having succeeded. But imagination here likewise interferes, and ascribes to each of these the characteristics of human personality. It figures three several consciousnesses (if this word can be rightly pluralized), each in itself independent, and neither necessary to the thought of the

other; hence three wills, or possible activities, only arbitrarily in accord, or in accord from the moral necessity of love. Thus we have a virtual Tritheism, with its attendant difficulties. The doubting mind relucts from this, and divisions in Christendom have arisen in consequence. The expressed mind of the Church in its conciliar decisions has guarded against this, but the propensity still persists. No doubt the common Christian mind, ever victimized by imagination, thinks the Christian doctrine of the Trinity in this tritheistic way, which may not necessarily be harmful to its devotional or practical life, but also may and has been. No doubt this has helped along the propensity to multiply the objects of worship, and has encouraged the cultus of the Blessed Virgin and other saints. It is then needful that theology should so rule the public Christian instruction as to obviate this propensity, and render needless the assaults of unbelief or misbelief.

The Christian Scriptures have guarded against this propensity likewise,—give no encouragement to it. They furnish material

for imagination in thinking the last manifestation of the divine in the incarnate Son; stimulate it in setting forth so clearly and minutely and amply Jesus Christ and his career. Here imagination cannot be too busy or do too much. But they furnish no suggestion, help, or stimulus to imagination in dealing with the Father or the Holy Spirit. These only manifest themselves to human apprehension in symbols, in the voice, or the tongues of flame, or otherwise; in symbols variable, and which give no hint whatever of the essential being of what they symbolize, and are only *media* of communication.

Again, at the time of the celebration of the Lord's Supper, imagination is very apt to busy itself in a manner not indicated by the requirements and significance of this ordinance. As when it creates a mental image of Jesus' concrete divine-human person, and connects it with the transaction then ensuing. This here has no special significance, and is no whit different from what may be done at any other time. It is a mere arbitrary juxtaposition, is not required

at the time, and rather diverts the mind from its proper work. Also, when certain views of this sacrament are held, imagination endeavors to present some indeterminate, vague, and shadowy image of our Lord's flesh and blood beneath the shews of the bread and the wine,—to imagine a miracle, in short—in which attempt failure is inevitable, and the effort has been wasted. This impotent effort, which is absolutely without result, has even been called an act of faith, and this significant word, with its profound ethical and religious implications, has thus been applied to a mere mental effort, which, even if it could be successful, could have no reaction upon the character.

As a final illustration, we may note that in dealing with the problems of Eschatology the vagaries of imagination have been markedly mischievous. In dealing with the condition of souls after death, and drawing inferences, the mind, in the imaginative effort, overpasses the bound where pure thought has left the doctrine of the Intermediate State, and carries into it still the

universe as determined according to our present knowledge. It carries the material elements, with all their properties (however refined, still material), it carries the human body, with its possible enjoyments and sufferings, into this abstract realm, and gives us purgatorial fires, or some other forms of physical pain or enjoyment. Even in dealing with the resurrected bodies, whether glorified or not, it still regards them as fixed aggregations of matter, and gives them spatial or dynamic determinations similar to our present ones. All which may not be necessarily harmful in the practical life, but which is certainly misleading in the endeavor to express the truth. In dealing with the fate of evil souls it has run riot, and the symbolic language of Holy Scripture, of fire, and brimstone, and the undying worm, has been taken literally. Thus the language intended to inspire moral dread of sin has been made to produce merely physical shrinking from apprehended pain. Imagination has also given occupations to Satan for which there is no scriptural warrant, and thus has been thrown into disre-

pute and met with denial the profound yet difficult doctrine of spiritual evil. Indeed, for imagination the future life is our present life still, with changes only arbitrarily introduced; while, in truth, the fate of the evil ones is for thought only, and no imaginative presentation is trustworthy.

The endeavor has been made to interpret the Divine Comedia of Dante as symbolical, on the ground that a mind so keen and capacious as his could not be content with views so crass of the future life, if the poem were intended to be literally interpreted. There is probably truth in this, and the poem must not be taken to express Dante's deliberate theologic opinion. But his scientific knowledge was so meagre that it is questionable whether he was able to emancipate himself from the erroneous views of his time, and these must necessarily have affected his philosophic system. It is doubtful, then, whether the poem was intended to symbolize any system of thought or to do more than illustrate and emphasize certain truths of the divine moral government.

Milton, too, in dealing with similar ob-

ject matter, uses imagination very freely. His poem would not be interesting had he not done so. But it is questionable whether we are right in inferring his theologic opinion from this—that, for instance, he thought Satan what he here presents him, full of the possibilities of good. He would not have been interesting had he been made purely evil. It is doubtful, too, for the same reason, whether we can rightly infer from the poem alone Milton's alleged Arianism. The conception of the Eternal Son is modified for the needs of the poem, to affect its pictorial power.

Poets, as such, can deal only with the concrete. Verse ceases to be poetry when it deals with the abstract. Therefore poets claim the right to abandon themselves very freely to imagination, and their philosophic thought cannot be accurately inferred from their poetic works. I have very little confidence in the attempts so often made of late to read into the lines of Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, or Goethe labored and reasoned systems of philosophy. The whole naive movement of the poetic mind is diverse

from this, and it has to do some violence to itself to throw itself into the philosophic attitude. One power is weakened by the exercise of the other, and poets love their own the best, and cease to be poets when they become philosophers. Some minds, in which both tendencies have been in struggle, might doubtless have accomplished grander work had they yielded themselves entirely to one propensity or the other. Truth cannot be made explicit for thought by imagery, by symbolization. But symbolization may give delight, and strengthen faith by hinting of the *noumenon* veiled in the beautiful phenomena, and thus carry the mind down into the depths, so that a unified system comes to be divined rather than thought out, and one, too, in which the concrete still remains in all its warmth. Philosophy proper brings no emotion, while poetry brings it to the full. The one is cold, the other is warm; and this heat sometimes dissolves error, precipitates it, and leaves the purer light. In this work imagination is the dearest and most satisfying power that the human being possesses.

Let me now speak, and with necessary brevity, yet with reluctance to decline a subject so fascinating, of some of its uses.

Much has been said from time to time of the use of imagination in scientific investigation, and I remember to have read years ago an article by Professor Tyndall upon this very thesis. I am inclined to think, however, that to maintain this position the word may have been used wrongly or applied too extensively.

In accumulating the facts concerning the material universe which are to be explained, memory and imagination have, of course, been busy, and by the latter power they are held and retained in their aggregation or apparent integrity. But in the endeavor to discover their fundamental law, or to unify them, a provisional or conjectural theory is supplied by the mind, which may prove inadequate to explain the whole, or may do so partially. This is not drawn directly from the special facts themselves, but is suggested spontaneously, or possibly from a larger induction, whose extent overlaps the present material, yet which does

not come at the time into distinct mental vision. An illustration of this is the Atomic theory, which serves provisionally to connect the facts, and enables many useful conclusions to be drawn, making of chemistry a progressive, comparatively clear, and practical science; yet whose failure to account for other facts throws again the theory into suspicion, and forbids mental rest; and thus it is not held as the absolute truth. But indeed the interposition of this or any other theory is not the work of imagination, which deals only with the actual concrete, or with ideal recombinations of the same. It is rather the work of pure thought, in which the scientific mind becomes philsophic in spite of itself. It is a tentative movement toward the discovery of a First Principle. It is derived rather from the mystical elements of our complex being,—springs from its predispositions, and a more or less profound sinking into their depths. It comes up thus from the depths so spontaneously as to seem an intuition or a revelation. But no sooner has this law been supplied by pure thought than im-

agination seizes it at once, and busies itself with its application and constructs its universe accordingly. It magnifies the invisible, intangible atoms into something, which the senses, were they sharp enough, might lay hold of, and thus only follows the guidance of pure thought, which again has only followed the innate predispositions implied in the creative idea.

All the concretes in the universe, in their integrity, or their elements, are the proper food for imagination. It may deal with the material as determined by the spiritual, although with the abstract spiritual it can do nothing. The mind only possesses all that comes within the compass of the intuitions of the senses, for all its uses, its truth, and its beauty, by virtue of imagination. This is the mediating passageway between these and all human activity. Every human being of necessity uses it, though with greatly variant degrees of power or vividness. Its activity is always emotion, sometimes distressing, but ordinarily delightful. The emotions of beauty and sublimity are simply its activity—the

soul thus rejoicing in its power to infuse itself into, to live in the life of that which it contemplates—wherein is the coalescence of its own freedom with the divine liberty. The emotion of the beautiful is simply the recognition that the movement of the universe is free and not necessitated, except by the self-necessitation of love. In human experience all enthusiasm and its resultant activity come from the unusual power and vividness of this faculty. Thus it enlarges and enriches the whole sphere of life, which, on the other hand, is narrowed and impoverished by its feebleness.

Into the religious life, into the contemplation of Christian truth, its activity may be legitimately carried. Heaven, as a commonwealth of holy souls, of glorified bodies, with a fluent and subservient environment, is a field into which it may safely venture and expatiate. By dwelling upon the rational satisfaction, the supreme beauty of this presentation, it may strengthen the loving and sacrificial disposition and harden the spiritual fibre.

Into Gehenna it is dangerous for it to

venture. There are no materials there for it to combine. It is the region of poverty, where there is no beauty nor satisfaction, no variety nor expansion. Imagination must fail here, as it fails to compass the infinitely little in space, which yet the thinking mind cannot deny. And even into Hades imagination must cautiously venture, for, as I have said, it is almost sure to carry this present world with it in such an enterprise, and the result of its contemplation is untrustworthy. But so far as Paradise has any characteristics of the ultimate Heaven, in the loving soul and the expanding intelligence, it may furnish material with which imagination may profitably deal. Thus those who mourn departed ones are not forbidden to think of them under these limitations, and to think of them as the interceding heart requires.

And especially may imagination find its dearest and most precious use in recalling for contemplation the image of Jesus Christ, as displayed in his career, his deeds, and his words. This is our human brother, the tender, sympathetic one, the

suffering and yet the majestic one. This is God's manifestation of himself as loving and benignant, as beneficent yet severe. Imagination can do no better thing than to fasten securely in the mind, to weave this image into the soul's own structure.

They "builded better than they knew," perhaps, these evangelists, who so recorded the events of that wonderful career as to display so clearly that mind and heart, now thought as human, and now again as divine, but rightly, though mystically, in the union and coalescence of the divine and human, as to exhibit that character to which human history furnishes nothing like, and with such attractiveness that the deepest abyss of our nature is reached, and we feel ourselves drawn irresistibly by the tender compulsion of love, to meet this divine-human heart, hardly knowing, when we yield, that we are entering upon a pathway that leads endlessly upward.

In the yielding to this supreme attraction the will represents, not the transient phase of the character, but the original constituents of human nature, the profound pre-

dispositions toward the good with which God created us, and which through evil had been turned inward upon themselves, into discord and confusion. Imagination has thus enabled this easy victory of the divine love. And if those in whom this faculty is less active do still, from moral and mental needs, yield to the truth of Christ, making more of a sacrifice and putting forth more spiritual strength—this shows that the providence of God and the supplemented activity of the Holy Spirit have recognized these differences in human structure, and proportioned their environment and their influence accordingly. These differences and degrees in imaginative power are dependent probably upon the degrees of fineness in the physical structure, upon brain-conditions merely. When the souls are emancipated from these, and subside into a purer consciousness, such differences will be equalized; and all will be alike in possessing the immediate intuition.

Yet the differences in soul structure, enabling an endless variety and not a monotonous sameness in the company of the holy

ones, must be prolonged into the heavenly life itself. How to explain these and exhibit as possible different modes of activity, is a speculative enquiry into which I will not now enter. But to our present thinking imagination will still be exercised, and acording to subjective needs, in the heavenly state. The spiritual soul will still constantly objectify itself, and infuse itself into that which it contemplates or creates, into the endless concretions of the divine thought, or its own recombinations of the same, into the spiritual souls which will not forbid, which will freely fuse themselves together.

Thus we see that human imagination is a reflection of the divine, inasmuch as it is the ability of the creature to do, under limitations progressively removed, what God does—to live in and enjoy that which it creates. Its activity is one element of the evidence that man is God's image. From the reward of delight which its normal activity brings we infer that the sights and sounds of the material universe which bring this joy are not dead and passsive phenom-

ena, are not transitory things, but living and everlasting; that God is in them, and his complacency in them, that they are his free movement and not necessitated from any alien source; that their blossoming into that wonderful characteristic of beauty, which we seize and appropriate with such transport, is one aspect of the coalescence of God with his human creature; that we, too, shall have unfettered power and unlimited resources, and that for this we were created.

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